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MELCHIZEDEK

OR

THE EXALTATION OF THE SON OF MAN

BY

G. W. REASER

"The Lord sware, and will not repent, Thou art a Priest forever after the order of Melchizedek." "Who is made, not after the law of a carnal commandment, but after the power of an endless life." "By so much was Jesus made the surety of a better testament,"

Hebrews 7:21, 16, 22.

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FOREWORD

Every Bible student meets with questions the solution of which will, for a time at least, elude his grasp.

The discovery of Bible mysteries, correctly viewed, is but a natural result of the study of the recorded thoughts of the Infinite by the finite mind. Such discoveries, instead of undermining the fact of inspiration in Divine revelation, are rather proof thereof; for it is written, "As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my thoughts (higher) than your thoughts." The unfolding of these problems is God's answer to the true search for living truth. When, with the solution of one of these Bible mysteries, a golden thread of Jehovah's marvelous system of truth is traced, and appears to our astonished vision, unbroken, harmonious, surpassingly beautiful, how profoundly are we impressed anew with the inspiration of the Word of God.

In the following pages we undertake the solution of a mystery which for ages has successfully baffled the pursuit of profound Bible

students. The author believes that there is a "fullness of time" in the plan of redemption for the unfolding of certain specific truths, "which hath been hid from ages and from generations." That a certain mystery has not been unfolded in the past does not militate against its importance. Even the prophecies pertaining to Christ's first advent were not comprehended by God's people until *after* their fulfillment. Then, too, the prophet Daniel was told to seal up the prophecies of his book until the time of the end." (Dan. xii, 4. See also 1 Pet. i, 10-12.)

Therefore the fact that the meaning of the prophecies pertaining to Christ as "a Priest forever after the order of Melchizedek" have not been grasped by God's children does not militate against their truthfulness, nor does it minimize their importance. Surely the oath of Jehovah by which Christ was made a Priest in that exalted order attaches sufficient importance to our theme to invite a candid study of the Melchizedek order of priesthood.

The writer is confident, as expressed by a devoted servant of God, that "there are mines of truth yet to be discovered by the earnest seeker," and that, "whenever the people of God are growing in grace, they will be constantly obtaining a clearer understanding of

His Word. They will discern new light and beauty in its sacred truths. This has been true in the history of the church in all ages, and thus it will continue to the end."

In presenting this brief work to the public and to Bible students of all creeds, the author desires to emphasize the thought that he makes no claims to superior knowledge of the Scriptures, nor to infallible interpretation of Bible mysteries. He would humbly submit the Scripture argument contained in the book, not dogmatically, but rather, suggestively, and as being the most harmonious, logical and satisfying of any theory known to him which attempts to account for the appearance in our world of "Melchizedek, King of Salem, Priest of the Most High God!" His personal interest in the theme is intensified from the fact that the Christian's hope,—which is "as an anchor to the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil, whither the Fore-runner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an High Priest forever after the order of Melchizedek,"—cannot be a wholly intelligent hope, unless we can in some degree get a mental grasp of the office of Christ by virtue of the fact that *as our Melchizedek* He now occupies a place at God's right hand.

If this treatise shall serve to exalt Christ

in the minds of the readers, elucidate the Bible mystery and thereby establish faith more firmly in God's living Word, and fasten hope more securely "within the veil," the writer will be abundantly repaid for his labor. With minds receptive to the influence of that Spirit which guides into all truth, let us begin our study.

With grateful appreciation for encouraging and helpful suggestions from the many friends in the gospel ministry to whom an outline of the contents of the book was submitted before publication,

I remain your coworker in the gospel,

G. W. REASER.

GLENDALE, CALIFORNIA.

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CHAPTER I

IMPORTANCE OF THE SUBJECT

"The Lord hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou art a Priest forever after the order of Melchizedek." (Psa. cx, 4.)

In all things under God, Jesus Christ must "have the preëminence." Jehovah has made this declaration concerning His Son. To accomplish this result He placed Himself under oath, the import of which was that, although Jesus would take a place of the utmost humility to accomplish man's redemption, yet in the end He must be exalted to a position as Priest-King, which would make him transcendent in glory and majesty above all who hold similar offices in the entire universe.

Candid reader, can you conceive of a more emphatic way by which Jehovah, in His Word, could seek to impress upon the minds of men a specific truth concerning the Messiah than by interposing Himself with an oath concerning that truth? If you are a Bible student, please try to recall how many times in all the history of the world Jehovah has deemed it

essential to place Himself under oath. If you have never given this question careful attention, you may be surprised to find how few such instances are recorded. It is even more surprising that practically all religious denominations plead ignorance concerning the nature and significance of the oath by which Jesus is made the Eternal Priest of our world, and relative to the important truths pertaining to His priesthood intended to be impressed by the oath.

The text of the oath is as follows:—"The Lord hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou art a Priest forever, after the order of Melchizedek." It is beyond belief of Christian people that the important truths intended to be impressed on the minds of mankind by this oath of Jehovah shall remain forever sealed.

It is true that certain portions of Scripture were purposely sealed until "the fullness of the times," in the plan of salvation for their unfolding (see Dan. xii, 9; Rom. xvi, 25, 26; Eph. iii, 3-5; 1 Pet. i, 10-12), yet before probationary time shall close, every seal placed by Jehovah upon His Word must be broken. Have we not reached the eventful day for the breaking of every seal,—for the full unfolding of God's treasure-book of truth?

The question is constantly raised by

thoughtful Bible students, "Who was Melchizedek?" Is there an intelligent Bible answer for the question, or must it forever remain unanswered?

The statement that Christ is "made a Priest forever after the order of Melchizedek" is repeated again and again in Holy Writ. We are entirely at sea in regard to what is meant by the parallel or likeness, unless we can discover what constitutes this "order," and what is involved and vested in it. And yet the Christian's hope is centered in the fact that our "forerunner is for us entered (within the veil), even Jesus," "made an high Priest forever after the order of Melchizedek." (Heb. vi, 19, 20.)

Inasmuch as the hope of the plan of redemption is based upon the fact that Jesus is made a Priest forever after the order of Melchizedek, and as such has entered within the veil as our Forerunner, suppose that an intelligent man who had been groping all his life in the darkness of heathenism should come in contact with representatives of the Christian religion, and should decide to make a candid investigation of the merits of Christianity. Such representatives would gladly place in his hands the Christian's Guide Book,—the Bible. In a careful perusal of its contents, the heathen

investigator must eventually read the book of Hebrews. Suppose that at this point he should come to you, a professed Christian, and ask you the question, "What is the meaning of your inspired Bible in calling your Savior a Priest after the order of Melchizedek? Will you kindly explain the nature of this priesthood to me, for I perceive that much importance is attached to it in your Guide Book." The question would surely be a fair one, and one that should receive an intelligent answer from the professor of the Christian religion. What answer would you give him? Would it be, "I am ignorant on this theme, and nearly the whole professed Christian world are likewise in profound ignorance of the character of this mysterious priesthood"? Would not this be a shameful confession for Christianity to make? But such is, in reality, the answer of Christendom to the question raised. Suppose that we should find such a paradox as this between the "sacred" writings and the universal confession of any of the great systems of heathen religions. Would we not be inclined to declare it to be an inherent weakness?

While it is human nature to minimize the importance of a subject that we do not comprehend, yet a moment's reflection upon the

importance which necessarily attaches to our theme because of the oath of Jehovah (Psa. cx, 4), and, further, because of the special prominence given to it by Paul in his letter to the Hebrews (Chapters v, vi, vii and viii), will appeal to all as ample justification for our investigation.

In commenting on the text: "This Melchizedek, King of Salem, priest of the Most High God" (Heb. vii, 1), one writer has said,—

"This passage is fragrant with the ointment of His [Christ's] name. Our hands drop with myrrh, and our fingers with sweet-smelling myrrh, as we lay them upon the handles of this lock. Let us get aside from the busy rush of life, and think long, deep thoughts of Him who is the Alpha and Omega of Scripture, and of saintly hearts. And let us draw from the unsearchable depths of His nature, by the bucket of this mysterious record touching Melchizedek, the King of Salem."

CHAPTER II

A MYSTERIOUS PERSONAGE

"Now consider how great this man was, unto whom even the patriarch Abraham gave the tenth of the spoils." **(Heb. vii, 4.)**

It will doubtless be conceded by all Bible students that the personage first brought to view in the Sacred Volume, under the title "Melchizedek," is one of the most mysterious characters introduced into Holy Writ. But one other can be said to hold equal rank with him in this, namely, our Lord Jesus Christ. His supernatural coming into our world was equally mysterious, as it is written, "without controversy *great is the mystery* of Godliness. *God was manifest in the flesh*, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory." (I Tim. ii, 16.)

In accord with the above statement is a quotation from the Encyclopedia Biblica, article "Melchizedek," which reads as follows: "The priest-king Melchizedek in Canaan is a startling phenomenon. The author of the

Epistle to the Hebrews treats the account of Melchizedek, in Genesis, chapter xiv, as a mine of suggestions for the right comprehension of the nature and office of Christ." Continuing, the author adds that the study of the identity of Melchizedek and the order of the Melchizedek priesthood, "even apart from Christian association, is surely a fascinating theme." The writer finds himself among the innumerable host of Bible students throughout the ages who have found this theme intensely fascinating.

McClintock and Strong refer to this mysterious character in the following language: "Bearing a title which Jews in after ages would recognize as designating their own sovereign, bringing gifts (bread and wine), which recall to Christians the Lord's supper,—disappearing as suddenly as he came in, he is lost to the sacred writings for a thousand years, and then a few emphatic words (Ps. cx, 4) for another moment bring him into sight as a type of the Coming Lord of David. Once more, after another thousand years, the Hebrew Christians are taught to see in him THE OFFICE OF THE PRIESTHOOD OF CHRIST."

Notwithstanding the study and research of men of talent throughout the ages, it is generally agreed by leading Bible scholars and

learned commentators that the mystery of the identity of Melchizedek is, up to the present time, unsolved in the minds of the Christian world. After summing up all of the theories set forth to fathom this mystery, these commentators use such terms as "guesses," "opinions," "unauthorized additions to Holy Scriptures," "shifts," and "absurdities," to describe what they regard as futile efforts.

Confronted by all this, it would seem to be almost presumptuous to advance a new theory and thereby take the hazard of being classed by the learned sages with others who have ventured to tread in this field of mystery. However, the writer believes with Dean Alford, who, in concluding his comments on this theme, states: "A day will come when all shall be clear," and God will "give us full revelation on this subject." We will add that the nearer we approach to the sublime event of our Lord's Second Coming, the more assurance may we have that all Bible mysteries pertaining to the plan of salvation will be disclosed.

Right here, however, we are less concerned about the matter of establishing the identity of the Melchizedek who met Abraham, than in determining what constitutes the *order* of the Melchizedek priesthood, and thereby learn what is the significance of the oath of Jehovah, by

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same order. From the fact that the description of Melchizedek as king of righteousness, king of peace, priest of the Most High God in perpetuity, and as having endless life, thus far corresponds exactly with the nature and offices of Christ and with the positions held by Him, many have thought that the Melchizedek who once met Abraham was Christ, but it can be easily demonstrated that this was a wrong conclusion.

That we may understand the oath by which Christ is made a Priest-king and secure the precious gems of truth contained therein, we must seek earnestly to determine what constitutes the *order* of Melchizedek priesthood. If we can clearly comprehend this oath, it will, in a new sense, give Jesus Christ the preëminence in all things.

To the end that the reader may have the objective point of the writer in mind, which will be a material help in weighing the evidence given, the following thoughts are suggested, in advance of full proof which will be presented later.

ANTICIPATION

The heads of all worlds are created beings. They are each created in the image of God. They are each priest-kings. They each bear

the title, "Melchizedek." Each head of a world is its "everlasting Father." Adam would have been the King, High Priest, everlasting Father of this world; or, to put the thought in other words, he would have been this world's "priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek," had he not lost his God-given right to the office by yielding to sin.[1]

[1] If it be objected that the idea of priest is only associated with offering sacrifices and intercession, let us recall the fact that Christ is styled our Priest-King, our Melchizedek, at the time when He has triumphed over all His foes and when the days of sacrifice and intercession for sin are forever past, and when He is King over all the earth. (Ps. xc, 4.) Also the redeemed are called *priests* of *God, because they appear personally before Him,* without other representation, and *this, after* all sacrifice and intercession for sin has ceased. (Rev. xx, 6.)

CHAPTER III

THIS PRIESTHOOD COMPOSED OF AN ORDER

"If therefore perfection were by the Levitical priesthood, . . . what further need was there that another priest should rise after the order of Melchizedek, and not be called after the order of Aaron." (Heb. vii, 11.)

The Melchizedek who met Abraham on the return of the latter from his victorious pursuit of Chedorlaomer was *not*, as some have thought, the Messiah; and yet Christ *is* Melchizedek. These statements, although apparently contradictory, are perfectly harmonious, as will appear later.

Reference is made but twice, in the Scriptures which antedate the birth of Christ, to the subject of our inquiry by his official title,—"Melchizedek." (See Gen. xiv, 17-20; Ps. cx, 4.) Doubtless he is mentioned in connection with a group or order of equal associates, in the 1st, 2nd and 38th chapters of the book of Job; but in these instances his official title is not disclosed.

We are studying a question of priesthood, under the new dispensation. The Aaronic priesthood, with its sacrificial system, expired by limitation at the Cross of Calvary. If our

investigation of the question of priesthood involved the Aaronic, we would logically go to the book of Leviticus. The only book of the New Testament which supplies the key to the solution of the Melchizedek order of priesthood is the book of Hebrews, sometimes correctly styled "the book of the priesthood of the New Testament, or the Leviticus of the new dispensation."

The book of Hebrews is a definite effort on the part of inspiration to set forth the priesthood of Christ. When the book of Hebrews was written, the Levitical or Aaronic order of priesthood had passed away, its economy in the plan of God having terminated. Therefore the Aaronic being in the past, this epistle does not assume to explain its system of priesthood in detail, but, rather, deals with the Melchizedek order, of which Jesus is now our great High Priest.

The Divine purpose in the writing of each book of the Bible is the unfolding of the complete plan of salvation for mankind; yet each book has its specific purpose, its link to supply in the golden chain of heaven-born truth. The distant purpose, in the writing of the book of Hebrews, is to exalt and magnify, to beautify and glorify the priesthood of Christ. The subject of this inspired epistle is first declared to

be equal with the Most High, Fellow-God; with the fullness of creative power inherent in Him; and so far superior to the highest angels in glory that *all* of these mighty messengers are invited to unite in His worship. (Heb. i, 1-6.)

It is further stated that notwithstanding His exalted position, His infinite greatness, His supreme power and glorious majesty, He condescended to take upon Himself the weak, fallen nature of sin-defiled humanity,—"For, verily, He took *not* on Him the nature of angels, but He took on Him the seed of Abraham," "that He might be a merciful and faithful High Priest." (Heb. ii, 16, 17.)

The argument of the first two chapters of the book under consideration is focused upon the first verse of chapter three, in the invitation to the "holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling," to "consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus."

In continuation of this discourse upon the exalted priesthood of Christ frequent reference is made to the fact that He was made of God, an High Priest "*after the order of Melchizedek*," and in this thought is the climax of the argument reached.

THE AARONIC AND THE MELCHIZEDEK PRIESTHOODS

In the Aaronic priesthood all that was neces-

sary to be a priest was to have descent from Aaron, with certain necessary limitations. The priests of Aaron's order served "unto the example and shadow of heavenly things." (Heb. viii, 5; ix, 1-12.) The Aaronic priesthood was an "*order*." (Heb. vii, 11.) In an *order* there must be more than one. One, only, can not constitute an order of priests.

Even so the Melchizedek priesthood is an *order*. There is more than one priest found in it. There are characteristics of this order of priests as follows: (1) They are called of God. (Heb. v, 1-5.) (2) They are sons of God. (Verses 5, 6.) This particular declaration of sonship is equivalent to an appointment to the priesthood. (Verses 8-10.) (3) They are king-priests. (Chapter vii, 1, 2.) So far as sacred history has revealed, with one exception, each stands alone in his priesthood, preceded and succeeded by no one in his priestly office; his priesthood is unchangeable. (Verses 17, 24.) All these specifications are met in Christ Jesus.

This oft-repeated statement of inspiration in declaring Christ to be "a Priest after the order of Melchizedek," is neither incidental nor accidental. The Holy Spirit does not thus employ language or play upon words. The purpose of Jehovah must be to convey to our minds

new conceptions of truth and beauty relative to the priesthood of Christ. But this effort of the Infinite Mind to exalt Christ as our great High Priest is lost upon us, unless we can discern the significance of the Melchizedek priesthood, and grasp the beauty and grand reality of the truth intended to be imparted to us in styling our Saviour a "High Priest forever, after the order of Melchizedek." There could be no force or meaning to the expression, if there is no solution to it. Is it possible that the strength of the discourse, the beauty of the culminating point of the book of Hebrews, in exalting the priesthood of Christ, is lost to earnest Bible students? Not so, if we can solve the problem which now claims our concentrated attention. If any fear "trespassing upon forbidden ground," we intrench ourselves confidently behind the invitation: "*Consider* the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus,"—in His office as "Priest after the order of Melchizedek."

There *was* a time in the life of Christ when He was *not* the High Priest of our human family. (Heb. v, 5.) When He was clothed by His Father with the office of priesthood, He was ordained to be a "Priest after the *order of Melchizedek*." (v, 6.) As already noted, more than *one* individual is necessary to con-

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"*another*" in the same "*order.*"[2] Christ had a pedigree. His ancestry is distinctly traced from Adam (Matthew i, Luke iv); Melchizedek is without pedigree. (Heb. vii, 3.)

In the study of priesthood and priest, let us reject the idea that sacrifice is *essential* to priesthood; that a victim must be immolated and its blood offered by the priest for the people. We wish to present what seems to us sufficient evidence to show that this is not an essential idea of the divine original priesthood.

In our first view of the Melchizedek priesthood there is neither mention nor intimation of sacrifice. Melchizedek comes out to meet Abraham the faithful. He comes with his hands filled with blessing, needed blessing, "bread and wine." (Gen. xiv, 18-20.) He came as a great father, provider, dispenser of blessings. He recognized the great God Most High as possessor of heaven and earth. Abraham recognized the exalted office of that priest, not by offering sacrifices, but by rendering him the Lord's due, the tenth of all.

[2] As regards the meaning in the original Greek of the word here translated "order," F. H. A. Schrivener, A.M., L.L.D., publishes a Greek Testament with Lexicon (Whittaker & Co., Publishers, London, 1877), in which, referring to Hebrews v, vi, vii, xi, he defines the Greek word "*taxis*" as "an order," "a distinctive class, as of priests."

CHAPTER IV

THE ORIGINAL PLAN OF JEHOVAH FOR OUR WORLD

"And to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ: to the intent that now . . . might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God, according to the eternal purpose which He purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord." (Eph. iii, 9-11.)

To reach a correct conclusion as to what is comprehended in the office of priesthood in the Melchizedek order, it will be necessary to briefly consider at least one phase of the question, "What was Jehovah's original plan for our world?" A correct answer to this question will definitely show the process by which Christ became the Melchizedek of our human family, and thus by analogy, who, throughout the universe, are the priests after the order of Melchizedek. The original plan of Jehovah for our world will eventually be carried to a glorious completion, notwithstanding the incident of sin, which for a few millenniums (a few days with God), has

seemed to defeat it, for none of God's plans can ultimately fail.

God's perfect plan for the universe comprehends a universal family, and this family composed of planetary families. One of these planetary families has fallen and thus broken the harmony which ought to prevail in the universal family. The effect of this inharmonious condition is well described in these words,—"For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth together in pain until now." (Rom. viii, 22.) God's eternal purpose includes the idea of bringing our planetary family, "the whole family of earth," into perfect harmony with the universal family. This blessed state of harmony will eventually be the glorious result of the completed plan of redemption, as it is written "that in the dispensation of the fullness of the times He might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth, even in Him." (Eph. i, 10.) When all this is an accomplished reality, Jesus Christ will be our Priest-King forever, after the order of Melchizedek.

At this point it is essential to a clearer view of God's eternal purpose that we diverge for a moment and study the meaning of the term "Melchizedek." We find this word to be a title, rather than a name. It is compounded

from two Hebrew words, *Melek*, meaning, a king, from *malak*, to reign; and *zedek*, meaning, right, righteousness,—"King of Righteousness," just what every eternal king under God over every dominion God-given must be.

When Jehovah bestows an official title, it invariably signifies in its root meaning the office, or the character, or both, of the person upon whom the title is bestowed. Recognizing this absolutely universal rule in the bestowal of God-given titles will give us a positively certain clue to the official position held by Christ in becoming, by the oath of Jehovah, a "Priest forever after the order of Melchizedek." Therefore to discover the character of the office held by Christ as a Priest after the order of Melchizedek, our first avenue of approach should be to seek for the signification of the term "Melchizedek." We have already ascertained this from the Lexicon, but we must pursue our quest still further.

When we discover the inspired meaning of the title, and then learn the process by which it was conferred upon Christ, we shall know exactly what office He will fill, what position He will hold, when the oath of Jehovah, making Him "a Priest after the order of Melchizedek," goes into full effect, and, incidentally, we shall learn the character of the offices held by each

member of the order of the Melchizedek priesthood. Happily inspiration has made special effort to help us on this point.

In the inspired definition of the title, and in the Scriptural specifications pertaining equally to Christ and to Melchizedek, we find that each is a priest forever of the Most High God, and each a king of righteousness and a king of peace (Melchizedek of Salem, which signifies "peace"; and Christ of Jerusalem, "God's City of Peace"). Thus in accepting God's universal rule in the bestowal of titles (and names as well), we discover in the definition of the title "Melchizedek," that by receiving the same, Christ becomes an eternal Priest, a King of Righteousness, and a King of Peace. (Heb. vi, 20 and vii, 1-3, 15, 16.)

We must now consider the meaning of the term "priest." We find that its primary definition is "father," and, secondarily, "representative." God's eternal purpose for our world was that Adam should be the father and the representative of the whole family of earth, and, barring his failure by sinning, eventually there would have been conferred upon him the offices of king of righteousness and king of peace. Doubtless every Bible student will concede that, by birth into our human family and

by triumphing where the "first Adam" had failed, Christ became "the last Adam." [1] (1 Cor. xv, 45.) Thus He became to our human family all that the first Adam was, or in God's plan was to become. And, inasmuch as the title "Melchizedek," in its meaning signifies what Adam was, and in the plan of God was to become to our world, so Adam having failed, and Christ having triumphed wherein the father of our race had failed, when the title "Melchizedek" was conferred upon Christ by the oath of Jehovah, that title carried with it in its root meaning all that Adam was, or was to become to our human family, and bestowed the same on Christ, "the last Adam." Thus when the title "Melchizedek," or "Priest after the order of Melchizedek," was conferred upon Christ, He, as sin's conqueror, took Adam's position and became our "everlasting Father," our Representative, our High Priest, our Eternal King.

With this discovery, how naturally are our minds carried forward by the prophetic Word to the time when, "Behold a King shall reign and prosper and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth . . . and this is the name whereby He shall be called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS" (Jer. xxiii, 5, 6), which is equivalent to a declaration that the Lord is our

Melchizedek, our King of Righteousness, our King of Peace.

As previously noted, the Melchizedek priesthood was composed of an order *before* Christ became a member of it. How may we determine the official position held by each member of the "order"? The simplest, most logical, most conclusive proof of the nature of the official position held by each priest in this "order" is the fact that, as Adam was the head, the father, the high priest of our world, and by divine right would have been its eternal king had he not failed, and as Jesus *was not a Priest in that "order"* (Heb. v, 5) until He had fully triumphed over sin, Satan, and death, at which time He became "the last Adam," "the everlasting Father," "the high Priest" and prospective King, in short the Melchizedek of our world,—therefore, the individuals who compose the entire "order" of the Melchizedek priesthood are each to their respective worlds all that Adam was, and all that Christ became to our world by taking Adam's forfeited place; for the meaning of the title "Melchizedek" conferred upon Christ as "the last Adam" logically compels this conclusion.

"In a word, God's remedy for the havoc wrought by the first Adam is CHRIST, 'the last Adam,' in

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CHAPTER V

ESSENTIALS OF THE MELCHIZEDEK PRIESTHOOD

"So also Christ glorified not Himself to be made an High Priest; but He that said unto Him, Thou art My Son, to-day have I begotten Thee. As He saith also in another place, Thou art a Priest forever after the order of Melchizedek." (Heb. v, 5, 6.)

The one who holds place in the Melchizedek priesthood must be a *son of God.* In fact, this priesthood and the sonship are terms used interchangeably. "So Christ also glorified not Himself to be made a High Priest, but He that spake unto Him, THOU ART MY SON, this day have I begotten Thee; as He saith also in another place, THOU ART A PRIEST FOREVER AFTER THE ORDER OF MELCHIZEDEK." (Heb. v, 5, 6.) This sonship of God is equivalent to the divine priesthood after the order of Melchizedek.

But this sonship referred to in Hebrews was not the eternal sonship of Christ of which men so often speak, but the sonship which Christ won through righteousness, acquired in His humiliation and his humanity through suffering, self-denial, and death, for which He was "declared to be the Son of God with power, accord-

ing to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead." (Rom. i, 4.) Then it was said, "Thou art My Son, this day have I begotten Thee." (Acts xiii, 33.)

It was not in God's plan that this sonship should come through the suffering but through the gift of God, and the maintenance of a holy character. Therefore, when God created this world He placed one at its head, gave him dominion over it all as earth's crown prince and prospective king.—Adam, "the son of God." (Luke iii, 38.)

But in God's universe are other worlds, and over each of these worlds Jehovah has placed a son of God by creation. Before this world came into being there were other worlds; and when this one was set forth in the development of the infinite plan "all the sons of God shouted for joy." (Job. xxxviii, 7.)

Adam did not retain his sonship. He yielded all to Satan, who became "prince" of this world; therefore, when the sons of God, the heads of the worlds, came together to the throne of the universe to meet with the King of Kings, Satan, as holding Adam's dominion where he went to and fro and walked up and down at will, "also came among them." (Job. i, 6; ii, 1.) The sum of which is this: As Adam, the prince and prospective king of this world, was

"the son of God," so these "sons of God" were each of them the king of some world in God's universe, and the priest after the order of Melchizedek in that world.

MELCHIZEDEK, LIKE ADAM, CAME DIRECT FROM GOD

In Heb. vii, 3, Melchizedek is declared to be "without father, without mother." An individual without father and mother must of necessity have come into existence by some other way than by birth. We know of but one other manner by which men can have existence except by birth; that other way is by a special act of creation. We have but two individuals of the created class belonging to our human family. These were Adam and Eve. The latter is styled "the mother of all living," which proves that our first parents were *the only two created members of our race.* Even Jesus, the Son of God, could not become a member of our race except by birth,—by becoming the "seed of the woman." All others came into existence by birth. If we find that Melchizedek came into existence by a special creative act on the part of Divinity, then we have discovered another individual who stands in the same class as Adam, a son of God by creative power.

Without irreverence we can safely say that it behooves inspiration to make its own state-

ments clear, to yield its own treasure of truth, when in the plan of God the fullness of time has come for each particular truth to be unfolded. If inspiration does *not* reveal, then we are left to guess at conclusions.

Now, if we discover that in the same inspired sentence which states that Melchizedek did *not* have existence by birth it is declared that he came into existence by being created, then God has not left us in the dark as to his origin.

The clause which explains the origin of Melchizedek reads as follows: "But MADE like unto the Son of God." First, let other portions of Holy Writ interpret these words. In Gen. i, 26 it is written: "And God said, let us MAKE man in our image after our likeness." In verse 27 we read, "So God *created* man in His own image; male and female created He them." In numerous other instances in the Scriptures the term "made" is used in the sense of "create." Please notice that in the following Scriptures the verbs "*make*" (past tense, "made") and "*create*" are used interchangeably. (John i, 1-3.) "In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were *made* by Him and without Him was not anything *made* that was *made*." We also find the word "made" used in the sense of

"created" in the Fourth Commandment; and in Heb. i, 2, where, in speaking of Christ as God's Agent in the work of creation, we read: "By whom also He *made* the worlds." (See also Rev. xiv, 6, 7.) It is, therefore, in perfect accord with the Word of God to say that Melchizedek was a *created* being, and was essentially like Adam, a son of God by creative power.

Another parallel between these two persons consists in the fact that they were both created in the same image or likeness. Of the one it is written, "And God said, let us make man *in our image, after our likeness*"; and of the other, "but was made *like unto the Son of God.*" In Col. i, 15, Christ is declared to be "the *image of* the invisible God," and if we are to take the words "all things were made by Him, and without Him was not anything made that was made" as all comprehensive, then we must conclude that Christ in conjunction with the Father was the Creator of ALL worlds, and of the first man of each world. We thus learn that Christ, the Creator, made Adam in His own image, after His own likeness, and that Melchizedek "was made" by Him in His own image, or to quote the exact phraseology, "*like unto the Son of God.*" [1]

[1] The "Emphatic Diaglot" translates this passage: "But having been made like to the Son of the God."

Could the parallel be drawn closer in regard to the origin and nature of two beings than that which the Scriptures themselves draw between Adam and Melchizedek? They assuredly stand in the same class both by coming into existence by creative power and by being made in the image or likeness of God.

Let us now devote our attention to other expressions found in Heb. vii, 3. The words "without descent" need no explanation, as "descent" refers to a fleshly line of ancestry. Like Adam, coming directly from the hand of God, Melchizedek had no earthly pedigree. The expression, "having neither beginning of days," will require the same rule of interpretation which we apply uniformly and always to arrive at Scripture truth,—namely, comparing Scripture with Scripture. We have already learned that it cannot mean that Melchizedek never had beginning of existence, or that his existence has always run parallel with Divinity, for there must have been a definite time when he was "*made* like unto the Son of God."

In Isa. lxv, 20, we find the expression, "an infant of days," employed to draw comparison between a child and a mature man. Melchizedek did not come into existence as human beings who have birth; he was never "an infant of days." Adam was never "an infant of days";

he was without "beginning of days" as an infant. Melchizedek did not begin life as do the children of the race of Adam and Eve. Like Adam, he came into existence in the full stature and vigor of manhood both in mind and body, and thus did not have "beginning of days" in infancy like the members of our race who enter life by birth. They both came into existence, not to develop as babes, but mature in mind and body.[2]

All mature members of our race, with the exception of Adam and Eve, had after birth, "beginning of days": first one day old, then two days old, etc., until they finally reached maturity. But Adam, Eve, and Melchizedek, coming into being, not by birth, but by creation, did not have "beginning of days" in this way. They never appeared to be one day old, two days old, etc., until in due time they had reached maturity. As looked upon by angels in creation's morn, the very moment that God had formed them and given them "the breath of life" they did not seem to be individuals beginning life as "infants of days," first one day old, then two days and so on, but rather, if thirty or more years of age was the period in

[2] Melchizedek did not begin his days in our world, or as "an infant of days" in his own world. He came here a fully matured man. In this sense was he without "beginning of days."

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perience by the creative power of God. They sprang, as it were, into being, without the necessity for a single day's growth in stature to reach maturity.

The next clause of the verse under consideration reads, "without end of life." This expression must mean that Melchizedek is still a living, active being. Evidently, however, his place of abode is not in our world,—else in the course of modern research he would have been discovered and brought to light as the most interesting character of modern times,—but belongs to another world, where he reigns, true to his title, as priest-king of righteousness and peace. When his mission here in Abraham's day was ended, he joined his own people in a sinless world where, according to the last clause of verse 3, "he abideth a priest continually."

Another link in the chain which lends its weight of evidence in supporting the theory that heads of worlds are all priest-kings, who bear the title of Melchizedek, is found in the parallel which exists between Adam, Melchizedek, and Christ, each in a peculiar sense being *sons of God* by a special creative act, indicating that high-priesthood after the order of Melchizedek and sonship in this special sense are equivalent in significance. Thus in Luke iii, 38,

Adam is declared to be the son of God,—and this, of course, not by birth, but by creative power; and as a son of God he was made in the likeness of God. We have already learned that Melchizedek was a created being, and hence a son of God by creation, and that he was made in the likeness of, or "like unto, the son of God." In Heb. i, 5, it is written of Christ that in the day that He was begotten again, or raised from the dead, He was declared to be the Son of God. To this fact other Scriptures bear testimony, and are even more lucid and forceful. In speaking of the sonship of Christ in Rom. i, 4, it is stated that He was "declared to be the Son of God with power . . . by the resurrection form the dead." The same power, by special creative act, brought Adam and Melchizedek into existence and brought Christ from the dead, and made them each a son of God. (See also Ps. ii, 7 and Acts xiii, 32-34.)

In Heb. iii, 1, Christ is declared to be "the Apostle and High Priest of our profession"; and in verse 6 the declaration is made that "He is a Son over His own house." (Or as in Eph. ii, 19, "household.") Adam would still have been the preëminent son of God, with the entire world as his family or household, had he not lost all by the fall; and in consequence of his failure, Jehovah said unto His "first-begotten" Son:

"Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever, a scepter of righteousness is the scepter of thy kingdom." (Heb. i, 8.) It is, therefore, clear that sonship, kingship, and high priesthood are vested in the class of beings to which Adam, Melchizedek, and Christ belong. We find even a closer parallel in the matter of sonship and the Melchizedek priesthood in Heb. v, 5, 6, reference to which will show that in the day that Christ was declared to be a Son of God by being begotten (from the dead, as already proven), He was also declared to be a Priest forever after the order of Melchizedek. Thus the declaration of His sonship and priesthood after the order of Melchizedek are coincident. In fact, He could not in the plan of God, laid in the fullness of Divine wisdom, become our High Priest, our King, until He had become a member of our human family by birth and had in the weakness of humanity triumphed where the first Adam failed and paid the full penalty for all that was lost in the fall.

Dean Alford, conceded to be one of the highest authorities on New Testament Greek, comments on the expressions, "without father, without mother, without descent," thus:—

"The latter of these three expressions seems, indeed, to represent a simple matter of fact: namely,

that Melchizedek has not in Genesis any genealogy recorded by which his descent is shown. But as to the two former, it cannot well be denied that, while they also may bear a similar sense: viz., that no father or mother of his are recorded in the sacred narrative, it is very possible on the other hand to feel that the writer would hardly have introduced them so solemnly . . . unless he had coupled them with far higher ideas than the former supposition implies. I confess this feeling to be present in my own mind; indeed, I feel that such solemn words seem to me to decide against that other supposition."

On the expression, "beginning of days nor end of life," he says, "Some commentators think these refer to *priestly* life," but adds:—

"They can hardly be understood of anything but his *natural* life, especially as following the Greek term *techillah,* and in the presence of the general biblical usage of the Greek word used here, which has the significance of a man's life-time. Accordingly, most expositors take the words in this their natural sense."

Opposing the theory of these expressions referring to his *priestly* life, he continues:—

"Again, however, no one, I think, can help feeling that such an interpretation is, in fact, no

worthy acceptation of these solemn words of the Sacred Writer."

On the words, "abideth a priest forever," we quote from the same high authority:—

"The expression is one that in each case must be interpreted by the context in which it occurs. There is no reason why here, *when an eternal priesthood is in question*, it should mean for life: indeed, such meaning would be absurd, seeing that *all* were priests for life. Such an interpretation too would not agree with the Greek term employed.

"All kinds of ways have been devised to escape the plain assertion of these words. . . . But thus, type and antitype are hopelessly confounded. . . . Everything shows that which has been maintained all through this difficult passage, that the assertions made, and this chief one above all is made ('abideth a priest continually') simply of Melchizedek; and they are, as matters of fact, inferred and laid down by the Sacred Writer from the historic notices of him. What further is implied from such dignity being here put on Melchizedek? *Certainly no interpretation which can in any way interfere with Christ's eternal priesthood can be correct.* It is one of those things in which we . . . must take simply and trustingly the plain sense of our Bibles on a deep and mysterious subject, and leave it for a day when all shall be clear to give us full revelation on this theme."

From Schaff's translation from the German of J. P. Lange's commentaries on the Epistles, on the expression, "without father, without mother, having neither beginning of days, nor end of life," we quote the following:—

"Neither is the language to be restricted to the beginning of his *priesthood* (see also Camero, Seb. Schmidt, Limb., Kuin, Hofm) inasmuch as *personally* he has been made the type of the Son of God."

Continuing he says:—

"Melchizedek appears as a king in relations which at once associate him with Righteousness and with Peace, as priest of the Most High God in the midst of idolatrous communities, and as blessing and receiving tithes from Abraham, the spiritual heir of the world. . . . A personage so great and so remarkable is, contrary to all the usage of the sacred history,—which is generally very studious and exact in giving the lineage of its important personages, and usually notices alike their birth and their death,—passed over without a solitary intimation as to his lineage or family relations, as to his birth or his death."

Again:—

"We must remember that the sacred historian is generally very studious to give the lineage of all

the sacred persons with whom he has to do, and almost invariably signalizes the fact of their death. Here we have a singular and marked exception. Melchizedek, evidently by the relations in which he appears in Genesis one of the most extraordinary men of sacred history, is yet passed over without one gleam of light shed on the darkness either of his past or his future. He thus stands on the sacred page amidst a narrative, which in its faithful record of births and deaths seems intended to illustrate the truth that 'Death reigneth from Adam to Moses,' as one *who liveth*. I have no wish, therefore, to derogate in the least from the depth of our author's meaning, or from the dignity and the mystery that invest the person of Melchizedek, or to reduce him to the prosaic level of ordinary humanity."

In Hebrews vii, 2, 3, there are nine specifications concerning Melchizedek, each of which pertains to one who was created to be the head of a world. This is clearly proven by the fact that all of these particulars would have applied in every detail to Adam, had he not forfeited his right to be the head of our world, and lost his place in the Melchizedek priesthood by the fall. Perhaps these nine points of likeness can be seen to best advantage if presented in parallel columns. This comparison adds material strength to the position taken by the author.

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or rather that the Lord desired to have conveyed, how could any Canaanitish priest, or for that matter any member of our race, aside from Christ and Adam, fill the specifications of the third verse of the seventh chapter of Hebrews, which declares that Melchizedek had neither father nor mother, descent nor end of life. If, as some say (although they thereby do violence to the Scriptures), that the inspired writer meant to say, "We have no record of his father and mother or of his death," how easy it would have been for him to have said so! And what a slur some thus cast upon inspiration by not admitting that the Holy Ghost is capable of expressing in words its intended meaning, and by not accepting the exact statements of Scripture, even though they may not comprehend the subject. It is always better to candidly admit ignorance of a Bible theme and occupy an attitude of waiting for additional light than to do violence to the inspired Word.

All of the effort of inspiration to put emphasis upon the fact that Melchizedek was an exalted character, occupying a unique position above all members of our race except the first and "last" Adams, is lost upon us unless we agree with the inspired statements that he was literally without father and mother by birth; that, coming directly from the hand of God,

he had no descent; that he never died, but was "made (created) like unto the Son of God," and "abideth a priest in perpetuity." Such a conception, or rather accepting by faith that which is written, does no violence to the Word of God, and at the same time makes clear one of the mysteries of the ages.

In fact, a most emphatic denial is made in verse eight of the position taken by some that "Paul meant to be understood that we have no record of his antecedents, his descent and his death." This verse reads: "Here men that *die* receive tithes, but there he receiveth them *of whom it is witnessed that he liveth.*" It is thus clear that the contrast is sharply drawn, *not* between men whose record we may or may not have, but between men who *die* and *one* who did *not* die. This Melchizedek order is composed of deathless individuals, and hence the close parallel between Christ and Melchizedek. (See also verses 15-17, 23, 24.) [4]

In further identification of the "*order*" of

[4] In order to demonstrate the strange interpretations sometimes given of Heb. vii, 3, I will raise the following question: Does an inspired argument have an added force in our minds over an uninspired statement? Some tell us that the inspired writer of the verse under consideration intended to convey the meaning that he did not *know* or had no record of the father, mother, pedigree, the beginning or the ending of the life of Melchizedek. What would we say of an uninspired writer who

priesthood called the Melchizedek, let us consider God's original plan for the high priesthood of this world. In whom was this office vested? In the patriarchal dispensation from Adam to Moses the priesthood was vested in the father of each family; hence the name of the dispensation is derived from *patra*, meaning father. Naturally then, Adam was the first priest of this world, and by right its high priest. He would have retained an endless, unchangeable priesthood if he had not surrendered the rulership of the world to the usurper. Because of this surrender, Adam lost his priesthood and could not find language to express his meaning more clearly?

Let us test the out-working of such interpretations of Scripture. A new leader of the Moroccan forces in North Africa, one El Hiba, has recently arisen from utter *ob*scurity. In our ignorance of his parentage, date of *b*irth, pedigree, etc., suppose that we should say that "he is without father, without mother, without descent, without beginning of days, without end of life." Would our lack of knowledge of his origin, pedigree, etc., justify us in saying that "he is *without* parentage, date of birth, and end of life"? Would not our expressing ourselves in such terms to indicate our lack of data demonstrate shameful ignorance in the use of human language, and amount to a*b*solute folly? Shall we accuse the apostle of im*b*ecility when speaking under inspiration of the Holy Spirit? This is exactly what we do when we say that "he intended to be understood to mean that we have no record of the parentage, pedigree, and end of life of Melchizedek, when he said that he was "without

Satan became "the prince of this world"; but he did *not* thus become the Melchizedek of our human family, for in character he is the direct opposite of the King of Righteousness and of King of Peace. His seat of government is more fittingly described by the term "Baby-lon,"—confusion, than by "Salem,"—peace.

Conceding that all worlds in space are not created in vain and are, therefore, inhabited (see Isa. xlv, 18), each planet would naturally have its Melchizedek: that is, its representative, its everlasting father, its high priest.

father, without mother, without descent, without beginning of days, nor end of life."

But those who thus attribute imbecility to inspiration are still baffled to explain the expressions, "made like unto the Son of God,"—"abideth a priest continually."

Such tactics if conceded, would make it an utter impossibility to prove any essential to the plan of redemption by the inspired Book. If the strongest proof-texts that can be given can be turned aside with the remark that "the Scriptures do not convey the meaning that the language employed would indicate," then all Scripture evidence is worthless.

I am profoundly thankful that there is no necessity for resorting to the art of juggling to explain any portion of the Sacred Volume. Any position which must be sustained by this method is manifestly incorrect. When we find the true solution to any difficult text, we shall see that inspiration is thoroughly capable of choosing language to clearly convey its meaning. The difficulties of the text under observation all disappear when we give the inspired writer due credit in his choice of terms to express certain truths concerning Melchizedek.

When our world had lost its rightful representative, its father, its high priest, its Melchizedek, it was not left by the Creator in this sad condition. Its Representative, its Everlasting Father, its High Priest, in a word its Melchizedek, was immediately foreshadowed in the institution of the sacrificial service, which for 4000 years focused upon the second or "last Adam." Yet during this period Satan had access to heaven as the representative of this world. (Rev. xii, 10; Job. i, 6.) There are doubtless appointed times when the representatives, the priests "after the order of Melchizedek" from all unfallen worlds in this universe, joyfully assemble in heaven to worship the Creator. Such occasions are clearly indicated in the first and second chapters of the book of Job. (Chapters i, 6, and ii, 1.) That the individuals here mentioned as "sons of God" were representatives of their respective planets is indicated by the fact that in the interview between Jehovah and Satan the latter is conceded to have been the representative of our earth,—a position which he wrested from Adam, and thereby became "the prince of this world." (Jno. xii, 31.) As additional evidence that these "sons of God" were the heads (the Melchizedeks) of other worlds, it is worth while to note that in designating Adam as the first man

of this world, *he is also called* "the son of God." (Luke iii, 38.)

One of the most forceful evidences that Adam would have been the high priest (the Melchizedek) of this world, had he not sinned, is found in the fact that until Christ was born into the world as a member of our human family, and became sin's sacrifice and through the cross Satan's conqueror, He did *not* become our High Priest after the order of Melchizedek." But, *coincident* with his becoming our Melchizedek, He became the second or "last Adam." (Heb. ii, 16, 17; vi, 19, 20; I Cor. xv, 45.) The logical conclusion is that, had Adam retained his sinless state, *he* would have been "a priest after the order of Melchizedek," and, therefore, that this "order" is composed of representatives of worlds who were created and given dominion over their respective spheres, as Adam was created and placed over the planet known to us by the name "earth."

Christ came into this world to be our Priest-King, our Melchizedek, which title, interpreted, is King of righteousness, and King of His own city of peace; for, in prophetically announcing the capital of Christ's future kingdom, it is said that "the name of the City from that day shall be, the Lord is there." (Ezek. xlviii, 35; Zech. vi, 13, 14; Rev. xxi, 1-6.) And this mean-

ing will be given to no other city in the universe, as the tabernacle of Jehovah will be with men and He will dwell with them. To the inhabitants of all worlds in space, whenever the name "Jerusalem" is spoken it will have a distinct meaning,—Jehovah's dwelling place. Thus the minds of all creatures in the universe will be focused upon the name and dwelling place of Jehovah.

The one who holds place in the Melchizedek priesthood must also be a father of those over whom he is priest,—father under God, even as he is king under God. Thus Adam was to be the father of all who populated this world. Every one among all this world's millions would call him father. From him would they receive life, disposition, character. God created Adam after His own likeness and image. (Gen. i, 26, 27.) "Adam . . . begat a son in his own likeness, after his image." (Gen. vi, 13.) He gave of his own life to all his children, and had he remained holy all would have been blessed in him. To him they would have always looked for counsel and blessing, and he would have been to them a minister of the life-blessings of God. But he failed. Sin perverted the image of God in him, and turned his blessings into curses; his life became death. His children became the children of sin, obedient to the prince of the

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sonship of God and the fatherhood of the race. His relation to the King of the Universe is that of Son; His relation to the children of the world who turn from sin is that of Father. Thus he became the most mighty of advocates, the most merciful and helpful of priests: our Advocate with the Father,—His own Son; our Savior and Helper, our eternal Father-priest.

The significance of "father" is, "possessing power to beget and to sustain life in his offspring; the founder of a race or family." Adam would have been the "everlasting father" of our human family had he not by sin forfeited the right, and lost the power to impart everlasting life to his posterity. He so far lost the powers essential to everlasting fatherhood that he could not perpetuate his *own* existence, and instead of imparting to his children eternal life, they inherited from him death. Jesus Christ, "who is our life" (the founder of our family), took upon Himself the everlasting fatherhood of His children. Thus, when His everlasting kingdom is established as set forth in the text (Isa. ix, 6), He occupies the position lost by Adam as "Everlasting Father."

What a wonderful thought it is that He who was the highest of all left the highest and undertook the forlorn hope of this poor, lost, sin-sick world, coming clear down to the lowest

depths of death and nothingness, and then by the fullness of the power of His righteous character ascending far up through and above all things a conqueror, that He might fill every vacancy in the universe which sin has made! (Eph. iv, 9, 10.) But when He ascended on high He took with Him, and takes with Him, into the heavenlies, a redeemed humanity. (Eph. iv, 8; ii, 4-7.) And in all the ages to come the praise of the glory of the grace of our great High Priest will shine forth in those redeemed from sin and death (Eph. iii, 9-11); so that where sin reigned and reveled in curses, woe, and misery, even putting to death the Son of God, there shall the throne of God be established,—the dwelling-place and center of Jehovah's dominion to all eternity,—covering all the evil attempts of Satan with the eternal, never-fading glory of the kingdom of our God and of His Christ. (Rev. xxi, 1-6; xxii, 1-3.)

Another essential of the Melchizedek priesthood is an endless life. The Levitical priests were made "after the law of the carnal [fleshly] commandment." The priests were men who died. However righteous and able one might be, like Jehoiada of old, he could help men only for a little while during his life; then he gave way to a successor. Not so with the priest after the order of Melchizedek. It was said

of Christ that His priesthood was "after the power of an endless [indissoluble] life; for it is witnessed of Him, Thou art a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek." (Heb. vii, 16, 17.) The endless ("indissoluble") life is an essential of that priesthood. Therefore, it is said of the Melchizedek whom Abraham met (and it is true of every other Melchizedek) that so far as the human is concerned he is without father, without mother, having "no beginning of days," a full matured father-priest in the very beginning, direct from the hand of God.

What hope and strength and comfort is there in this: "For the law" [which made the Levitical priests, Heb. vii, 19] "made nothing perfect"; but the bringing of the "better hope" in the priesthood of the endless life does make perfect, "because He abideth forever," and "hath His priesthood unchangeable." Wherefore also He is able to save *to the uttermost*" ["completely," in quantity and quality of time] "them that draw near unto God through Him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them. For such a high priest" [after the order of Melchizedek] "became us, holy, guileless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens; who needeth not daily, like those high priests, to offer up sacrifices,

first for his own sins, and then for the sins of the people; for this He did once for all, when He offered up Himself. For the law appointeth men high priests, having infirmity; but the word of the oath, which *was after the law*, appointeth a Son, perfected forevermore." (Heb. vii, 24-28, A. R. V.)

The priest after the law could transmit to his son no higher life than he himself possessed,—a mortal life. He could give to the people not even this life; but one Melchizedek priest can transmit and does transmit to all His sons (and if we receive Him we are sons: John i, 12; I John i, 1-3) the everlasting life, which in righteousness becomes the "indissoluble" life, and so makes them under Him "kings and priests unto God and His Father; to Him be glory and dominion forever and ever." (Rev. i, 6.)

In its fullest sense the Melchizedek priesthood is an everlasting priesthood. Note the contrast between the earthly and the Melchizedek priesthood: "And they indeed have been made priests," many in number, because that by death they are hindered from continuing; but He, "because He abideth forever, hath His priesthood unchangeable" [because always a son of God, always a father, always a king of righteousness]. "Wherefore also He is able to save to the uttermost" ["completely," not merely as

regards quantity or magnitude, but as regards *time*] "them that draw near unto God through Him, seeing He *ever liveth* to make intercession for them." (Heb. vii, 16-25.)

If any one thing is made a certainty by the forceful language of the apostle in Hebrews vii, it is that the Melchizedek order of priesthood is eternal. It is composed of individuals who "have the power of an endless life" and thus of perpetual priesthood. This being true, what must we conclude with reference to the Melchizedek who met and blessed Abraham? There is but one logical conclusion,—he was not a member of our human family, for "here men that die receive tithes; but there he receiveth them of whom it is witnessed that *he liveth*." (Heb. vii, 8.) In this fallen world a perpetual priesthood vested in a single individual has always been an impossibility "by reason of death."

He whose hope is anchored in the Melchizedek of God has an everlasting father of everlasting love, everlasting mercy, everlasting sympathy, everlasting riches of grace, everlasting power of help, everlasting life to give. Praise God for His everlasting priesthood. Yet this is God's glorious plan for every sentient being. O soul, trust in the everlasting Helper.

CHAPTER VI

THE OATH OF JEHOVAH

"Those priests were made without *an oath, but this* with *an oath. For the law maketh men high priests which have infirmity; but the word of the oath which was since the law maketh the Son, who is consecrated forevermore."* (Heb. vii, 21, 28.)

In the mind of the author one of the overwhelming proofs of the position taken that the Melchizedek order of priesthood is composed of individuals who occupy positions as priest-kings of worlds is found in the 110th Psalm.

In approaching our study of this Psalm, which casts a flood of light upon our theme, it may be well to observe, that careful investigation of the entire volume of Scriptures written prior to the production of the Epistle to the Hebrews will reveal the fact that only twice is the title "Melchizedek" recorded:—once in Gen. xiv, 18, where it is applied to the person who met and blessed Abraham, and again in Psa. cx, 4, where it undoubtedly has application to Christ.

In Heb. vii, 28, it is stated that there was a law concerning succession in the Aaronic priesthood which made men high priests who possessed

infirmities, "BUT THE WORD OF THE OATH, which was since the law, MAKETH THE SON [high priest] WHO IS CONSECRATED FOREVERMORE." [1]

THIS PRIESTHOOD CAME OF GOD AND WAS RATIFIED BY AN OATH

The priests of the house of Levi exercised their office after "the law of a carnal commandment." They assumed it, not because especially summoned to the work by the voice of heaven, but because they had sprung from the special sacerdotal tribe. The priesthood of Christ, on the other hand, is God's best gift to men,—to thee, my reader, and to me: more necessary than food, or light, or air. Without it our souls would wander ever in a Sahara desert.

And such was the solemnity of His appointment that it was ratified by "the word of the oath." Here is strong consolation indeed. No unfaithfulness or ingratitude can change this priesthood. The eternal God will never run back from that word and oath. "Eternity" is written upon the High Priest's brow; "forevermore" rings out from the chime of His golden

[1] It is a matter of peculiar interest that Jehovah placed Himself under oath concerning two things. One was to give to Abraham and his seed the kingdom of this world, and the other, to provide a King for the world-kingdom. (Gen. xxii, 15-19; xxvi, 3, 4; Rom. iv, 13; Psa. cx, 4, and cv, 9.)

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spiration in the logical arrangement or setting of Jehovah's thoughts in His Word. This fact is full of significance in our study of the text of the oath by which Jesus is made a High Priest forever after the order of Melchizedek.

Now if our position is well taken, may we not expect to find the original oath in such a setting as will indicate that it will not go into *full* effect,—become fully operative,—until Christ takes possession of this world as its rightful King? And, if we find the original oath by which He is made of Jehovah a Priest forever after the order of Melchizedek, in just such a setting, will this fact not be a strong link in the chain of proof that the position herein taken is the correct solution to the question as to what office Christ will fill by being made a High Priest in the Melchizedek order? In the mind of the writer, the establishing of this fact will supply proof beyond controversy that the Melchizedek order of priesthood is composed of persons designed by Jehovah to be eternal heads and kings of worlds; for, if Christ becomes a Priest after that order by becoming the Head and King of this world, then the logic is that all heads of worlds are priests in the same order.

Why should the eternal God of truth choose in this special instance to put Himself under

oath? Surely not to make the fulfillment of His promise more certain in His own plan or in His own mind, but rather to give emphasis to the promise comprehended in the text of the oath, and thereby rivet the attention of His people upon the promise. This thought is confirmed by the following inspired words found in Heb. vi, 16-20: "For men verily swear by the greater; and an oath for confirmation is to them an end of all strife. Wherein God, willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of His counsel, confirmed it by an oath: that by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us: which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil. Whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an High Priest forever after the order of Melchizedek."

If in our study of the oath in its original and inspired setting we find that it is to go into *full* effect only when Christ takes possession of this world as its rightful King, then we are again driven to the conclusion that the Melchizedek order of priesthood is composed of those who are priest-kings of worlds.

Before turning to the Psalm wherein the oath is recorded, let us note Dr. Adam Clark's comment on this marvelous Psalm. He says:

"This Psalm [cx] is short in appearance, but deep and copious in mysteries. The subject without doubt is Christ. (See Acts ii, 34; Heb. i, 13; Heb. x, 12, 13; Matt. xxii, 44.) In the latter text Christ applies it to Himself. While all have acknowledged that this Psalm is of the utmost importance, and that it speaks of Christ's priesthood and victories, it is amazing how various are the interpretations which are given of its different passages.

"It has, however, appeared to me that there is a key by which all the difficulties of the Psalm may be unlocked."

We concur that before Christ comes back to earth and the prophecy embraced in the oath is fulfilled God's people *ought* to obtain the key to unlock the treasure-house of this Messianic Psalm.

Now, preliminary to our verse-by-verse study, let us read the Psalm.

"The Lord [Jehovah] said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool.

The Lord shall send the rod of thy strength out of Zion: rule thou in the midst of thine enemies.

Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power, in the beauties of holiness from the womb of the morning: thou hast the dew of thy youth.

The Lord [Jehovah] hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou art a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek.

The Lord at thy right hand shall strike through kings in the day of His wrath.

He shall judge among the heathen, he shall fill the places with dead bodies; he shall wound the heads over many countries.

He shall drink of the brook in the way: therefore shall he lift up the head."

That Christ ascended up on high and took a position at the right hand of the Father when He had finished His earthly ministry as set forth in the first clause of verse 1 (Heb. x, 12, 13) needs no proof to any Bible student; therefore, we will not consume time by supplying Scripture proof of this fact. But the next expression is not so clear to all. WHEN do Christ's enemies become His footstool? Jehovah declares, "The heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool." (Isa. lxvi, 1.) Is there to be a time, according to the Scriptures, when Christ's enemies are to be made a part of His footstool, or are to be reduced to the physical material of which the earth is composed? Let a few Scriptures out of the multitude of refer-

ences which might be cited supply the answer. Jeremiah declares (chapter xxiii, 5), "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a king shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice *in the earth*." Luke asserts (chapter i, 32) that the throne of David will be given to Christ, and Jesus declares Himself to be "the root and the offspring of David." (Rev. xxii, 16.) In the parable of the sower (Matt. xiii, 24-43), Christ Himself explains the manner in which this world, called the "field" in the parable, will be prepared for the setting up of His eternal kingdom. He says (Matt. xiii, 41-43): "The Son of Man shall send forth His angels, and they shall gather out of His Kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity; and shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth. Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Who hath ears to hear, let him hear."

The same truths concerning the preparation of this world for the kingdom of Christ are set forth in the parable of the nobleman who went away to receive for himself a kingdom and to return. (Luke xix, 12, 27.)

The prophet Malachi bears definite testimony concerning the time when the enemies of our

Lord will become a part of His footstool, preparatory to the setting up of His kingdom. He says: "Behold, the day cometh that shall burn as an oven, and all the proud, yea all that do iniquity, shall be stubble, and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord of Hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch. And *they shall be ashes under the soles of your feet*, saith the Lord, *for ye shall tread down the wicked* in the day that I do this, saith the Lord of Hosts." (Mal. iv, 1, 3.)

Surely when, in the literal fulfillment of the prophecy, the wicked are reduced to non-sentient ashes and in this condition are trodden under foot, the enemies of the Lord form a part of His footstool, and the prophecies will then go into full effect, which declare: "And I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of Man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought Him near before Him, and there was given Him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages should serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and His kingdom that which shall not be destroyed." (Dan. vii, 13, 14.) "And there were great voices in heaven, saying, *The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His*

Christ; and He shall reign forever and ever." (Rev. xi, 15.)

Thus we have in the first verse of this Messianic Psalm the clearest possible evidence that the oath by which Christ is made our "High Priest forever after the order of Melchizedek" *goes into full effect* when He takes possession of the world as His eternal kingdom of glory, for although He is both Priest and King now, yet the oath will never go into full effect till He *takes possession of His kingdom.* (v, 4.)

Let us now see if the remainder of the Psalm corresponds with this interpretation. The second verse reads: "The Lord shall send the rod of thy strength out of Zion: rule thou in the midst of thine enemies."

When does the Lord send the rod of His strength out of Zion, and rule in the MIDST of His enemies? According to Revelation xx, 7-9, after the millennial period has passed and Zion the City of God, the New Jerusalem, has descended to the earth, for "a little season," Christ rules in His capital city, literally in the MIDST of His enemies. He then sends the rod of His strength out of Zion, and the results which follow are described as follows: "Thou shalt break them" [the wicked] "with a rod of iron; Thou shalt dash them in pieces as a potter's vessel." (Psa. ii, 9.)

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of God's power, in contrast with the day of His mercy or grace, can have no other meaning in this connection than that day when He takes the power which rightly belongs to Him, destroys His enemies, and reigns supreme; when Satan and His followers are dethroned for evermore. This is in harmony with Rev. xi, 17, which reads: "We give thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty, because thou hast taken to thee thy great power, and hast reigned."

"Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power."

This doubtless means that the children of the kingdom will be willing *then*, that the wicked shall be destroyed, for the destruction of the ungodly is the subject under consideration. No one who has the Spirit of Christ in his heart is willing *now*, while mercy lingers and there is hope of salvation, that the vast hosts of the wicked shall be smitten with eternal death. But when probation shall finally close, when mercy no longer lingers, because God's Spirit, effectually grieved away, ceases to strive with men, as it did when Noah's message to a doomed world had been given: when the final judgment has passed in which every hidden thing will have been brought to light and the counsels of every heart made manifest, so that the true character of every lost member of our race will be under-

stood; and when, a last evidence of the incorrigibility of the wicked and of their persistence in fighting against God is revealed in their united assault upon the beloved city (Rev. xx, 7-9),—*then* all those who possess that spirit of love and mercy manifested by the Savior of men upon the cross of Calvary will be *willing* that the wicked shall "sleep the sleep that knows no waking"; for why should the unnumbered millions of the lost, who "have come short" in character and have not learned the way of happiness or eternal life, continue to suffer eternally and never cease their warfare against God? Not only will the righteous be "*willing*" that the wicked shall perish in the day of God's power, but, according to the word of the Psalmist, they will even have a part, at least, by their decision in the judgment, and, therefore, will give their approval in the execution of "the judgments written" upon the wicked. (Psa. cxlix, 4, 9.)

What a halo of glory attaches to the next expression! The most beautiful thing in the universe is perfect holiness. It is needful here that inspiration make explanation of the great secret as to how Christ has preserved His full vigor so that He may finally accomplish the glorious result of the final overthrow of sin and rebellion. In this climax of inspired poetical

expression, made, if possible, more sublimely beautiful by oriental coloring, we are transported away from all contaminated environment to the fragrant summer fields at the entrancing moment of the birth of a new day. All nature is in her sweetest mood. The sparkling dewdrops, distilled in Nature's own laboratory, glisten like millions of tiny diamonds in the rays of the rising sun. Absolute purity is enthroned upon Nature's fragrant bosom. The vigor of all things animate has been renewed during the night.

Even so, when Christ comes forth to perform the duties which devolve upon Him in the day of final retribution for the ungodly, it is prophetically foretold of Him, "In the beauty of holiness, from the womb of the morning, Thou hast the dew of thy youth." Although at that time He will have been "the Son of Man" for many centuries, yet because He has preserved spotless purity of character, He will have retained His full vigor, as fresh as at creation's morn when He spoke our solar system into existence. He is as "strong in power" to overthrow the wicked as He was before sin entered the universe. He can crush it finally.

Sin is the only thing in the universe that weakens and makes hideous. It is self-destructive. "The wages of sin is death." The

climax of weakness is death. The most striking possible comment on the sinfulness and, thereby, the weakness of the human family, is the appalling daily toll of death taken from our race. More than one hundred thousand members of Adam's posterity are overpowered by and succumb to death during each twenty-four hours. In the day of Christ's power Satan's followers will say of him who is the author of sin, "Art thou also become weak as we? How art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations!" (Isa. xiv, 10, 12.) The secret of perpetual youth is everlasting righteousness. "In the way of righteousness is life; and in the pathway thereof there is no death." What a splendid premium upon holiness!

This inspired description of the perfection of character of Christ is in exact accord with that given by Jehovah of His Son, as recorded in Hebrews, chapter one. Please note the parallel. "But unto the Son He saith, Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever: a scepter of righteousness is the scepter of thy kingdom. Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity; therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows. And, Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the work of thine hands: they shall perish; but

Thou remainest; and they shall wax old as doth a garment; and as a vesture shalt Thou fold them up, and they shall be changed; but Thou art the same, and thy years shall not fail." (Verses 8-12.)

And now we come to the vital verse of the Psalm (verse 4). When David recorded these words he was doubtless as ignorant of their meaning as are the masses of the people now of the Hebrew language. He simply spake as he was "moved by the Holy Ghost." From the brief exposition of the preceding verses, doubtless all will agree as to the *time* when the oath of Jehovah by which Christ is made Priest-King forever, after the order of Melchizedek, will go into FULL effect.

We will now notice the expression "will not repent." Why are these words thrown in? What occasion would Jehovah have for repenting, or more literally, turning back from His purpose? Primarily, these words would give force to the oath by declaring it unchangeable, no matter what emergencies or exigencies might arise. But there is much more involved in their deep meaning. God knew full well when He placed Himself under oath the terrible price at which that oath must be fulfilled. He knew that in order to make the oath effectual His only begotten Son, Fellow-God, must become

man. He was conversant with the fact that His Son in human form must meet Satan, and overcome in temptation on every point where the first Adam failed. He foresaw the effort to destroy His infant Son at Bethlehem; the fasting and temptation in the wilderness; the suffering in the Garden of Gethsemane; the cruel smiting; the crown of thorns, and all of the heart-rending scenes of Calvary. Being infinite, He could "taste" with His Son the agonies of death. Our God knew that all this and infinitely more would be the purchase price of Christ's stepping into Adam's place to be our Savior, our High-Priest, "touched with the feelings of our infirmities" that He might be our King of righteousness; and yet it is written, "The Lord hath sworn *and will not repent* (or will not turn back from His oath); Thou art a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek. By *so much was Jesus made a surety* of a better testament." (Heb. vii, 21, 22.)

Before Christ could be made our High Priest, He must be made "sin for us." This, in brief, is the explanation of the expression, "The Lord hath sworn and *will not repent*." In making "Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin," that He might thus become our Redeemer, is the occasion for repentance,—for turning back from His purpose,—for such is the meaning of "re-

pent." The price paid for our redemption was the occasion for repentance, but He decided to pay the price, "for God *so* loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." It is as though Jehovah had said: "Let Satan and evil men do their worst, still I will not withdraw from my purpose to make my Son a Priest forever after the order of Melchizedek."

This emphatic expression, "will not repent," very clearly indicates that marvelous condescension was necessary on the part of Christ *before* his exaltation could follow. What else could be the meaning of the expression, "The Lord hath sworn and *will not repent*"? When we consider the marvelous sacrifice of the Father in giving Christ to redeem Adam's failure, his family and his world, then we discover the occasion for repentance—literally turning back from carrying out the oath—on the part of Jehovah. If the carrying of the oath into full effect did not necessitate the birth of Jesus into our human family, so that He could "taste death for every man" and thus redeem all that was lost in the fall, then what occasion for repentance can be discovered in the putting into operation of the

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Priest-King, a Melchizedek, consecrated forevermore to be the head of the Divine-human family.

He knew that in giving His only-begotten Son to humanity He would always be a member of our race, and always wear the nail prints in His hands. He knew full well that Christ would, as being the great spiritual head of His body (the church), through the operation of the Holy Spirit, suffer with each member of His body till their suffering should forever cease and sin's power over them be crushed forevermore.

The priest-king gives his life not always in sacrifice, but in service for His people. So Christ, our Priest-King, our Melchizedek, gives the outflowing of His life in a full overflowing stream of infinite love throughout eternity to the subjects of His kingdom.

Please observe that the meaning of the words "*will not repent*" is lost unless the position is taken that the oath of Jehovah made Jesus Adam's successor as the head of our world. When the thought of the possibility of Jehovah's repentance or turning back from a course determined upon is suggested, then we must candidly consider the occasion for such repentance. We have already given a brief outline of the occasion for the turning back

of Jehovah from His purpose to have Jesus take Adam's place, and redeem all that Adam lost. The occasion was the infinite and unsearchable price at which our salvation was purchased.[2]

Let us raise the inquiry as to what the word of the oath made of Christ. If we are correct in our premises, it simply brought Him into the position where He became all that Adam was or ever would have been to this world, had he

[2] It is worthy of the thought of every candid student that the words "will not repent" which are incorporated into the oath cannot refer, as would be the logic of some, to Christ's being made a Priest after the order of Shem. In fact, Shem never was a priest-king, and thus not a Melchizedek. The meaning of this wonderful inspired clause is also hopelessly lost if, as others say, Melchizedek was the Holy Spirit, for what occasion would there be for repentance on the part of Jehovah in making His Son the anti-type of the Holy Spirit?

It must be apparent to all that if we stray away from the fact that Christ was made *by* the oath a priest after the order of Melchizedek in order to be Adam's successor and to redeem all that he lost, we make the word of the oath of none effect.

God has never since the organization of the first nation in the history of the world recognized a priest-king in one person. No king over Israel could ever, with the approval of heaven, officiate as a priest. The two offices have ever been separate. There is, therefore, no man in this world under divine appointment as priest-king, as Melchizedek, nor will there be such a personage until Jesus Christ reigns over this world as its rightful Priest-King.

by faithfulness come into possession of the full heritage of his office. Or, to clothe the thought in other words, the oath made of Christ a Melchizedek, a Priest-King, an Everlasting Father, a Son by creation (or, better, by re-creation), even as Adam was a son of God by creation. Then as Christ was by the oath "consecrated forevermore" to the offices lost by Adam, and by this consecration was made a High Priest after the order of Melchizedek (all of which came to Him by virtue of His choice to become the "last Adam"), it is evident that the first Adam would have been forevermore a priest after that order had he not failed; and thus, logically, the order is composed of those who occupy such positions as Adam once held by right, but which will center upon Jesus Christ as a result of His becoming "the last Adam" in consequence of the failure of the first Adam.

In the beginning of this world's history the priesthood was vested in the father-priest of our race, Adam. When he had lost all by the fall, the father of each family was still the priest for those of his own household, and the whole system of patriarchal or father-priesthood pointed forward to the Everlasting Father-Priest who was to come. When He came and took the priesthood His order was the

Melchizedek priesthood. Therefore, the only logical conclusion is that He took Adam's place in the Melchizedek priesthood.

In every particular Jehovah made Christ Adam's successor. If it can be demonstrated that the oath by which Christ was made a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek conferred upon Him every office that would have belonged to Adam had he remained loyal to God, and made Christ the successor to that office, then it is clear that Adam would have had the office of a priesthood after the order of Melchizedek, for the oath of Jehovah confers that office upon Christ. We might demonstrate the truthfulness of this statement by considering what offices Adam would have held had he not been succeeded by Christ, and thus what offices were conferred upon Christ by virtue of his succeeding Adam.

First, Adam was the head of this world. That office and the dominion belonging thereto passes to Christ as it is written, "And thou, O tower of the flock, the stronghold of the daughter of Zion, unto thee shall it come, even the *first dominion*." (Micah v, 2.)

Second, Adam was the father of this world, in which office Christ succeeds him as our "Everlasting Father." (Isa. ix, 6.)

Third, Adam was the original father-

priest of our world, which office was conferred upon the "last Adam." (Ps. cx, 4.)

Fourth, Adam would have been the king of this world, but that office is now conferred upon Christ. (Rev. xi, 15.)

Fifth, Adam was the Son of God by creation; Jesus is the Son of God by re-creation or resurrection from the dead. (Rom. i, 4.) All of these offices were conferred upon Christ by the oath which made Him our High Priest after the order of Melchizedek; therefore, this oath simply made Him Adam's successor in all that pertained to the office of the Melchizedek order of priesthood.

Although his birth into our human family was essential to His becoming our Melchizedek, yet He could neither step into the office of Priest or King or Everlasting Father solely as a birthright; but before He could fill either of these offices He must pass through the preparatory experiences. For the kingship he must, as the "seed of the woman," "bruise the serpent's head," and thereby become complete conqueror over all foes. This will be accomplished when Satan is finally destroyed. For the priesthood He must by birth "be made like unto His brethren," must triumph over every temptation and over death, and pay the full penalty for the sins of His people. As Ever-

lasting Father, He must have the power necessary to give life everlasting to His children. As a Son, He must be brought again from the dead by creative power.

That the oath does *not* go into full effect, or that all that Jehovah intended to confer upon Christ by the oath will not be realized until Christ takes possession of this world as its rightful King, must be apparent when the force of the following Scripture quotations is taken into consideration. First, please observe that no man can be a fully qualified and inaugurated priest-king after the order of Melchizedek until he is placed in possession of a kingdom (Heb. vii, 1, 2); for the office of king is meaningless unless it includes a kingdom,—subjects and territory. The oath making Christ an eternal Priest-King (that is, a Melchizedek) will surely, when it becomes fully operative, place Him in possession of everything that pertains to a complete kingdom. The oath, while operative now in that the subjects of His kingdom are being made up (and the whole trend of God's eternal purpose in this world is toward the setting up of His eternal kingdom), will reach its objective point and go into full effect *after* the inauguration and coronation of Christ (Dan. viii, 13, 14), when the declaration will be made that "the

kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign forever and ever." (Rev. xi, 15.)

At His trial before Pilate Christ assured that Roman ruler that He had not yet taken possession of His kingdom, although born into our human family *to be* a King. His words were these: "My kingdom is not of this world; if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight that I should not be delivered to the Jews; but NOW is my kingdom not from hence." (John xviii, 36.) At the end of this present world the announcement will be made by "great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world *are become* the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign forever and ever." Thanksgiving is then offered "because Thou (Christ) hast taken to thee thy great power and hast reigned." (Rev. xi, 15, 17.) He then sends His angels to gather out of His kingdom all things that offend and that do iniquity (Matt. xiii, 40, 41), and, simultaneously with the oath becoming fully operative, the prophetic words of Gabriel addressed to Mary will go into full effect: "He shall be great and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto Him the throne of His father David . . . and

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We are still further and more deeply confirmed in our belief that the prophetic oath making Christ a High Priest after the order of Melchizedek goes into full effect when Jesus takes possession of this world as His eternal kingdom by a careful study of the last three verses of Psalm cx, and at the same time, the unfolding of this theme in such perfect harmony with God's plan of salvation impresses us more deeply with the inspiration of the Bible.

The meaning of the 5th verse of the Psalm under consideration and the time when it applies will be clear to all Bible students. All of the ungodly, including kings and potentates, will be pierced with death. (See Rev. vi, 14-17.)

Verse 6 reads: "He shall judge among the heathen, He shall fill the places with the dead bodies; He shall wound the heads over many countries." The judgment of the heathen here referred to is manifestly *not* of an investi-

priests continually, and come into existence physically by a special act of creative power, as did Adam in the *b*eginning of this world's history, and as did Christ when He was *b*rought again from the dead. Therefore, as clearly set forth in the seventh chapter of He*b*rews, the claims of any church to having the Melchizedek priesthood composed of men proves their whole system to be built upon an unscriptural foundation.

gative nature, but, instead, an *executive* judgment, for the places are filled with dead bodies, evidently referring to the time when those who know not God—for such is the meaning of "heathen"—shall become ashes under the feet of the redeemed.

The last verse of the Psalm suggests two closely associated thoughts to our minds: "He shall drink of the brook in the way, therefore shall he lift up the head."

First, it was necessary for Christ to "taste death for every man," to drink, as it were, the whole torrent of this world's sorrow before He could be our Savior, Father, Priest and King, for the Captain of our salvation was made perfect—was perfected for his four-fold office—through suffering. (Heb. ii, 9, 10.) By bearing our sins in His own body on the tree He accomplished the glorious result of lifting up our heads in joy and gladness to all eternity. The sentence of death fastened upon each one of us stood in the way of our becoming members of the kingdom of Christ. But "He drank of the brook in the way," "tasted death for every man," received the death stroke in His own body, so that our heads might be lifted up with the joys of eternal salvation.

Second, after Christ has finally destroyed all of His enemies, and the world (His kingdom)

is fully redeemed from all the blighting effects of sin, what will be more natural and beautiful than for the Life-Giver to Himself lead the way to the River of Life which flows through the "way" or through the midst of the chief highway of the New Jerusalem, and, drinking of its life-giving waters, invite the redeemed to freely partake thereof! And when they have drunk of its crystal waters, and feel a new life current coursing through their being,—with all the reality of their blessed estate in their Eden home bursting upon them,—surely their heads will be lifted up with joy and gladness forevermore. Reader, may this experience be ours to enjoy. Please note the striking contrast. With the one class He wounds their heads, inflicting fatal wounds upon unrighteous kings, while with the redeemed He lifts up their heads with overflowing joy forevermore.

It is pertinent to the position herein taken that when Christ is finally established upon His throne, as this world's rightful King, He will still fill the office of Priest, but not as an intercessor for sinners. This fact is proven by the prophetic utterances of Zechariah in chapter vi, verses 12 and 13 which read as follows: "And speak unto him saying, Thus speaketh the Lord of Hosts, saying, Behold the man whose name is the BRANCH; and he shall grow

up out of his place, and he shall build the temple of the Lord: Even he shall build the temple of the Lord; and he shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon his throne, and he shall be a priest upon his throne: and the counsel of peace shall be between them both."

All Christians will agree that "the man whose name is the BRANCH" is the "Son of Man," Christ Jesus. The statement is made that "he shall grow up out of his place." Christ did certainly "grow up out of His place" for "His place" (His home) was in heaven: His office, Creator: His being, Fellow-God. But He came to this world, was born a member of our human family, became the Son of Man, grew up far removed from His home of light and glory, from associations with the Father and the angelic hosts, in a dark, cold, friendless world. Surely the prophet spoke truthfully when he said, "He shall grow up"—from childhood to manhood—"out of His place," out of His environment, far away from the courts of glory.

He did this,—made the supreme sacrifice by pouring out His soul unto death,—that He might "build the temple of the Lord," the church of the living God; for He came down from heaven to preach "peace to you which were afar off and to them that were nigh."

"For through Him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father. Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God: And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief corner stone: In whom all the building fitly framed together *groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord.*" (Eph. ii, 18-21.) And having built the temple of the Lord by the sacrifice of Himself, surely He is entitled to "bear the glory."

"Come let us sing the songs;
The angels first began the strain,—
The homage which to Christ belongs:
Worthy the Lamb, for He was slain.

"Slain to redeem us by His blood,
To cleanse from every sinful stain,
And make us kings and priests to God:
Worthy the Lamb, for He was slain.

"To Him who suffered on the tree
Our souls, at His soul's price, to gain,
Blessing and praise, and glory be:
Worthy the Lamb, for He was slain.

"To Him enthroned by filial right
All power in heaven and earth proclaim
Honor, and majesty, and might:
Worthy the Lamb, for He was slain.

"Long as we live, and when we rise,
And while in heaven with Him we reign,
This song our song of songs shall be:
Worthy the Lamb, for He was slain."

The yielding of Adam, the rightful prince, to the arch-deceiver gave the latter the title of "prince of this world"; and holding this office even by usurpation, he had access to heaven as the representative of our world. (Job. i, 6 and ii, 1.) This office was held by Satan who, instead of being a true representative of our race, appeared in the courts of heaven as an "accuser of the brethren" until Christ had gloriously triumphed over Satan, where the first Adam failed. Then was the usurper cast out of Heaven (Rev. xii, 1-12) and Christ took His place as our Representative at the central court of appeal,—the mercy seat of the universe.

Christ did not assume to be the Advocate and Representative of this world till He had conquered where Adam failed. When He had thus conquered the enemy and author of death and had ascended in glorious triumph to heaven, then this change in representation took place and Satan was cast out. Then, instead of our having "an accuser of the brethren" to represent us, Jesus, our Elder Brother, our Advo-

cate and Friend, became our Representative to plead His own blood in our behalf. What a priceless gift to our human family is our Melchizedek, our Representative, our Advocate! (Rom. viii, 31-35; Heb. iv, 14-16; I Jno. ii, 1.)

The next statement which claims our attention is that "He shall sit and rule upon His throne." (Zech. vi, 13.) In the coming kingdom it would appear that the Father and Son will jointly occupy the throne of the universe. In the statement, "He shall *sit and rule upon His throne*," of necessity *kingly* rather than *priestly* authority is involved, for a king must have a throne upon which he officially sits and from which he rules. But not only is Christ to rule as King, but He shall also be "a Priest upon His throne." How wonderfully is the title which Christ will wear fulfilled in this prophetic description. That title is "Melchizedek," and is bestowed because of the fact that in its God-given meaning it indicates exactly what Christ will be to all eternity, "first being by interpretation, priest of the Most High God"—"King of Righteousness," and after that also "King of Salem" which is King of Peace. How beautiful is the next thought: "And the counsel of peace shall be between them both." In order to rule jointly upon the throne

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ister of the sanctuary, of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched and not man. For every high priest is ordained to offer gifts and sacrifices; wherefore it is of necessity that this man have somewhat to offer. For if he were on earth, he should not be a priest, seeing that there are priests that offer gifts according to the law. Who serve unto the example and shadow of heavenly things, as Moses was admonished of God when he was about to make the tabernacle: for, See, saith He, that thou make all things according to the pattern showed to thee in the mount. But now hath he obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also he is the mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises." (Heb. vii, 28; viii, 1-6.)

It will also be apparent from the reference just cited that Christ's "more excellënt ministry" in the heavenly sanctuary as High Priest after the order of Melchizedek is for the definite purpose of finally establishing the "better covenant" with all of its "better promises" for the benefit of the "heirs of promise,"—the subjects of His eternal kingdom.

It is manifestly impossible that the provisions of the new covenant can be carried into *full* effect until Christ's kingdom is established in our world (Heb. viii, 8-13), when the benefi-

ciaries of the new covenant will receive "the promise of eternal inheritance." (Heb. ix, 15.) The logic of all this is that, coincident with the carrying into effect of the oath by which Jesus is made our eternal Priest-King and the establishing of His everlasting kingdom of peace and glory in our world (made new), all of the new covenant promises become fully operative. For, as has been abundantly proven from Psalm cx and parallel Scriptures, the oath making Christ our Priest-King (our Melchizedek) does not meet with its *entire* fulfillment until the kingdoms of this world become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ, and it is perfectly clear that *all* of the provisions of the new covenant, as set forth in Jer. xxxi, 31-34 and Heb. viii, 6-13, will never meet with their fulfillment until the new earth state is ushered in and "the meek inherit the earth and delight themselves in the abundance of peace."

So far as recorded, the only person ever made priest after the order of Melchizedek by an oath of Jehovah was Christ. Evidently all other persons having place in that high order were created for their respective offices. How contrary, therefore, to Divine revelation for any church to assume to create a priesthood after the order of Melchizedek, and make pre-

tense of exalting their fellow-men to positions in that exalted order! Christ as priest, is the Great High Priest of the universe; while as King, He is King of kings and Lord of lords.

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thus become our High Priest (Heb. ii, 16, 17), even so, in order to become our King, He must clothe His Divinity with humanity,—put human nature on. And thus do we learn that one step in the process by which He became our Priest-King, our Melchizedek, was by coming into our world in the same human family of which Adam was the head.

We have already given Bible proof of the truth that Christ's literal and physical, as well as spiritual kingdom will be established on this earth. He entered upon His priesthood immediately after His ascension, but does not take possession of the kingdom till He returns to this world.

The earth was made for the home of man (Gen. i and ii), and the curse of sin upon it did not destroy the design of God that the earth should be inhabited by a people that are "all righteous" (Isa. lx, 21); "for thus saith the Lord that created the heavens, God Himself that formed the earth and made it; He hath established it, He created it not in vain, He formed it to be inhabited; I am the Lord; and there is none else." (Isa. xlv, 18.) God's very existence is pledged to do what He designed to do in the beginning. Man refused to obey in the beginning, and sold himself under sin

(Rom. vii, 14) to the author of sin. Yielding himself, he yielded all over which he had dominion. Satan in this way usurped authority and became "prince of this world." (See John xii, 31; II Cor. iv, 4; Luke iv, 5-7.) This power of Satan is broken by Christ. (Rev. xii, 10; Heb. ii, 14.) But although the kingdom was surrendered to Satan, the unfailing promise of our God is that it shall be wrested from him by One mightier than he, and be restored to the redeemed family of whom Christ is the head, as it is written: "And Thou, A Tower of the flock, the stronghold of the daughter of Zion, unto Thee shall it come, even the *first* dominion; the kingdom shall come to the daughter of Jerusalem." (Micah iv, 8.)

Inasmuch as Adam would have been the king of righteousness and the king of peace over all the world had he not failed, what steps must be taken by the Son of God before He can take Adam's place in the kingship of this world? Let the Savior Himself answer. Pilate asked Him the question, "Art Thou a king then?" Jesus anwered, "*Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end was I born.*" (Jno. xviii, 37.) When Jesus made this answer it would seem as though He had in mind the very thought of the Scripture given of old through Himself to the prophet Isaiah, as it is written: "Unto us

a Child is born, unto us a Son is given, and the government shall be upon His shoulders; and His name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of His government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David shall He sit, and upon His kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even forever. The zeal of the Lord of Hosts will perform this." (Isa. ix, 6, 7.)

As a matter of fact, in the infinite wisdom of our God it would seem that Christ would *not* have been a fit King for the redeemed human family had He come to our world and taken a place upon a throne simply as the Son of God. *He must become the Son of Man to be a King*, perfectly adapted to the requirements of a race of beings who in the weakness of their humanity endured the fierce conflict with sin and Satan. The highest angel in glory, as such, could not consistently be the king over redeemed human beings. The God-man only is fitted for this office.

As the Son of God, Christ would have had power to have physically destroyed Satan and to have wrested the kingdom of this world from him to whom Adam surrendered it, but, in order in both the wisdom of God and man to

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no purpose. His blood, although royal, was not the right kind of royal blood for the Mexican nation. They must have a man of their own flesh and blood. When he was dethroned Benito Juarez, a native Indian, was made ruler and idolized by the people.

To carry out the thought, so dear to the human heart, of having a king who is born to the people over whom he is to rule, when an heir to the throne of Great Britain was to be born England's queen, in order to bind the people to the throne more effectually, went to Wales, where the crown prince was born, that he might be the ruler of Wales as well as of all Britain; hence the title, "The Prince of Wales," borne always by the oldest son of Britain's ruler.

When God wanted to bind all the people of our world to the government of heaven He sent His Son into the world, to be born a member of our human family. The prophecies foretold that *the seed of the woman* would bruise the serpent's head, and again, by anticipation, "*Unto us a Child is born*, unto us a Son is given." The angels also made the announcement, "*Unto you is born* this day in the city of David, a Savior, which is the Christ the Lord." Thus God adapts the plan of salvation, with its matchless king, to every require-

ment of the human hearts of the Divine-human family.

Please note again the expression, "to this end was I born." Born to take Adam's place, in the taking of which He finally becomes the King and Everlasting Father over all the earth, and takes the title conferred upon Him by the oath of Jehovah as Priest-King after the order of Melchizedek.

Question. If Christ becomes Priest-King, King of Righteousness and Peace (for such is the interpretation of the title Melchizedek) when He takes the kingdom that would have belonged to Adam had he retained his righteousness, then what title would have belonged to Adam had the kingship been conferred upon him? *Answer.* Surely he would have been styled the Melchizedek of our world.

Question. Then what constitutes the order? *Answer.* Individuals created of God, as was Adam, as heads, as priest-kings of righteousness, and hence *Melchizedeks*, of worlds. Thus the title belongs to the one occupying the position of world-wide king, under God.

And this underlying principle is not an arbitrary thing, for God recognized it as absolutely essential in order to have perfect affinity between the ruler and his subjects. It would not have been right in the plan of God

to have Christ take the position of King of this world simply as a Divine being. He must put human nature on and pass triumphantly through all the experiences of the subjects of His kingdom, except sin, or the relationship of King and people would not be perfect to all eternity.

Daniel in prophetic vision foresaw this when he said, after viewing the final judgment scene which just precedes the giving of the kingdom to Christ: "*I saw in the night vision and behold, one like the Son of Man* came with the clouds of heaven" [an escort of angels] "and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought Him near before Him. And there was given dominion and glory and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages should serve Him."

Why did not Daniel say that he saw one like the Son of God? Because he recorded God's perfect plan in which the kingdom of this world *must be given to the Son of Man*,—a member of our race. Praise our God, "Unto *us* a Child is born, unto *us* a Son is given," and that Son perfectly and completely supplies every possible requirement as Savior, Priest, and King.

Jesus had absolute perfection as the Son of God in heaven, but that He might be per-

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over death and the grave, which also gives infallible proof that Jesus will presently bring *all* of the righteous dead forth from their graves and transplant them, immortalized, in His everlasting kingdom. If these twenty-four elders who are already in heaven give thanks in anticipation of the setting up of the kingdom of Christ, the hearts of the children of the kingdom who are still in this vale of tears should *leap* for joy at the prospect of the soon-coming of our King to establish His kingdom of righteousness and peace forevermore.

"Crown Him with many crowns,
The Lamb upon His throne;
Hark, how the heavenly anthem drowns
All music but its own.
Awake my soul, and sing
Of Him who died for thee;
And hail Him as thy matchless King
Through all Eternity."

THE SEED OF THE WOMAN

All that Christ has done and will do for humanity was foreshadowed in the first promise of a Deliverer after the awful ruin into which Adam by his fall had plunged the world. To quote the thought of the promise in brief: "The Seed of the woman shall bruise the ser-

pent's head,"—the Son of God must become the seed of the woman before He could by His death, pay the penalty for sin and thus become our Savior. Having overcome temptation, sin and Satan, then with the acceptance of the supreme sacrifice for *all* sin came logically the right, authority or power to crush sin and its author forevermore. (Heb. ii, 14.) He must become the seed of the woman before He could be our High Priest, as a Priest must be taken from among His brethren so that they will know that He is *touched with the feeling of their infirmities.* He could not become our King until He became the seed of the woman, and it requires kingly, rather than priestly, authority to bruise the serpent's head.

Thus we comprehend in this brief promise: First, kingly authority in bruising the serpent's head,—inflicting a fatal wound; second, sonship, being born of a woman; third, fatherhood in imparting life and constant care to His children; fourth, a Savior, offering Himself as a sacrifice for His race; fifth, the Priestly office in becoming the chief Representative of the redeemed family and an Intercessor; sixth, by becoming the seed of the woman, He received the authority to officiate as Judge also, as He said Himself, that the Father "hath given Him authority to execute judg-

ment also, *because He is the Son of Man.*" (John v, 27.)

But someone will be inclined to ask, "Why this treatise concerning the necessity for Christ to be *born* into our family before He could be our King? What has this truth to do with His becoming our High Priest after the order of Melchizedek?" Dear reader, the line of thought just presented constitutes the groundwork of a vital link in the chain of truth by which Jesus succeeded Adam in the most exalted priesthood known to the universe, namely, the Melchizedek. Please recall our premise,—namely, that this order is composed *only* of Sons of God who are rulers of world dominions, each an everlasting father of his world.

"In the beginning" God, the Father-King of the universe, gave Adam complete dominion as a prince over all the earth, as stated by the Psalmist: "Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of Thy hands; Thou hast put all things under his feet." (Psa. viii, 6. See also Gen. i, 26 and Heb. ii, 7-9.)

As a prince, Adam in his fall could only surrender that which he possessed, and while Satan, the usurper, claimed the *kingship* of this world, yet Christ only conceded him to be the *prince* of this world. (Luke iv, 5-7; John xii, 31, and xiv, 30.) Had Adam stood the test,

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of Jehovah goes into *full* effect which constitutes Him forever a Priest-King after the order of Melchizedek. Had Adam remained faithful he would have received the crown and the kingdom; therefore, the only logical conclusion is that the Melchizedek order of priesthood is composed of those who under divine appointment sit upon world thrones as kings of righteousness and of peace. Surely, the fact that in becoming the Priest-King of this world Christ fills the position of a High Priest "after the order of Melchizedek" furnishes strong evidence that the Melchizedek order of priesthood or of priest-kings is composed of those whose offices embrace world dominions.

According to that wonderful prophetic statement of the Psalmist, with the declaration of this sonship there is also conferred the gift of the uttermost parts of the earth for Christ's eternal possession. Thus, when He enters into possession of His kingdom, which includes the "uttermost parts of the earth," He takes the dominion that was originally given to Adam, and in taking that dominion He takes it under the title of Melchizedek, which title logically would have belonged to Adam had he retained "the uttermost parts of the earth" for his eternal inheritance. (Read the entire second Psalm, especially noting verses 7 and 8.)

Upon whomsoever the title "Melchizedek" is bestowed by Jehovah, it signifies exactly what the individual *is*, both in character and in official position. Thus the final effect of the oath of Jehovah, making Christ a Priest forever after the order of Melchizedek, is to make Him the "King of Righteousness" and "King of Peace" of our earth (made new), for the prophets foretold His qualifications for eternal kingship in terms which exactly correspond with the inspired interpretation of the title "Melchizedek." Please observe the following examples:—"Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth." "And this is His name whereby He shall be called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS." (Jer. xxiii, 5, 6.) "And His name shall be called . . . The Prince of Peace." (Isa. ix, 6.) "But unto the Son He saith, Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever: a scepter of righteousness is the scepter of thy kingdom. (Heb. i, 8, 9.) "And He hath on His vesture and on His thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS." (Rev. xix, 16.) As the one Mediator between God and man, Jesus is now engaged in the work of preparing the subjects, for His eternal kingdom.

CHAPTER VIII

"OTHER WORLDS THAN OURS"

"God . . . hath in these last days spoken unto us by His Son, whom He hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also He made the worlds." (Heb. i, 1, 2.)

Probably there is not an astronomer in all the world who would not ridicule the idea that the earth, which by comparison with uncounted millions of spheres in the universe is but a floating atom in a boundless sea, is the only inhabited globe among them all. Relative to this theme, Professor H. U. Stevens says:—

"Each star is a sun in many ways like our sun, some larger, some smaller,—the center of a system around which revolves worlds and satellites upon which intelligences live and flourish."

Upon this subject Professor Richard A. Proctor says:—

"We see proofs on all sides that, besides the world on which we live, other worlds exist as well cared for and as nobly planned. Nay, we see globes by the side of which our earth would seem but as a tiny speck; we trace these globes as they

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"My object, then, in the pages which follow is not solely to establish the thesis that there are other worlds than ours, but to present in a new and, I hope, interesting light the marvelous discoveries which have rewarded recent scientific researches. Judged merely according to their direct significance, these discoveries are well calculated to excite our admiration for the wonderful works of God in His universe, and for the far-reaching scope of the mental powers which He has given to His creature man. But it is when we consider recent discoveries in their relation to the existence of other worlds, when we attempt to form a conception of the immense varieties of the forms of life corresponding to the innumerable varieties of cosmical structure disclosed by modern researches, that we recognize the full significance of those discoveries.

"And, in any case, no argument can be drawn from the moon's unfitness for the support of life against the view that, where orbs fit for the support of life exist, there Nature has provided such classes of living creatures as are adapted to the special habitudes of those orbs.

"But, on the other hand, we are taught that the existence of differences sufficient to render a distant planet an unsuitable abode for such creatures as we are familiar with cannot force upon us the conclusion that the planet is uninhabited.

"On the contrary, the lesson conveyed by our earth's analogy leads to the conclusion that many worlds may exist, abundantly supplied with living creatures of many different species."

Other men of broad education have spoken definitely on this theme. In referring to Magellan as the first to circumnavigate the globe, Doctor Draper said:—

"He first impressed his name indelibly on the earth and on the sky, on the strait that connects the two great oceans, and on *those clouds of starry worlds* seen in the southern heavens." ("Intellectual Development of Europe," p. 452.)

Again:—

"It does seem incredible that we alone should represent in the universe the image of God; and if in one solitary star another race of beings dwells, if we concede the existence of a single spirit other than ourselves, we have allowed the principle."

STOPFORD BROOKE.

"A belief that there are other worlds besides our own is not an essential article of religion, but such a belief serves to enlarge our ideas of the works of God, and to illustrate the greatness of His power and wisdom."

KITTO.

Mr. C. H. Spurgeon suggests "that in the boundless regions of space there are worlds inhabited by beings infinitely superior to us, and it may be that on set days the princess from far-off realms, the kings, the mighty ones of His boundless realms, come to the court of

Christ in joy and gladness, and, all united, raise their voices in shouts and hallelujahs such as mortal ear has never heard."

Doctor O. C. Godsmark raises the question:—

"Is Venus inhabited? Why not? There is naught in all the boasts of infidel science to the contrary. Why should not Venus be the home of intelligent creatures, made in the image of God and living to His honor and glory?"

In accord with the foregoing are the words of Daniel March, D. D. In his book entitled, "Our Father's House," he says:—

"And surely He who has multiplied forms of life beyond all finite conception in this world has not left the countless millions of worlds in His great kingdom without living inhabitants to enjoy His gifts and to declare His glory. If the greatest astronomer cannot count the suns and systems that blaze in the midnight heavens because they are so many, so vast, so far remote, how much less can we conceive the numbers and orders and generations of living creatures for whom the great creating Father hath provided habitations and happiness in all the universe of worlds which declare His glory!

"We sweep the heavens with the mightiest telescope, and we look with dazzled eye and aching brain amid the infinite blaze of worlds to find the

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Over each of these worlds possessing inhabitants Christ doubtless placed a man, created in His own image, as the head, the father, the progenitor, to replenish his world with his own family. At least, this would be His plan if we reason from the analogy of our own world, for the expression given us of the counsel between the Father and the Son relative to the creating of the first man of our world and to the peopling of that world was, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness," and to the man He said, "Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it; and have dominion . . . over everything that moveth upon the earth." (Gen. i, 26, 28.)

That Jesus made provision in the creation of all worlds for their complete replenishing each with a race of beings in His own image or character, is further suggested in the following words: "Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power; for thou hast created all things and for thy pleasure they are and were created." (Rev. iv, 11.) His pleasure is in making others happy, and, proving that He finds joy in *inhabited* worlds, speaking of Himself, He says, "Rejoicing in the habitable parts of the earth; and my delights were with the sons of men" (Prov. viii, 31); "be ye glad and rejoice forever in that

which I create; for, behold, I create Jerusalem a rejoicing and her people a joy, and I will rejoice in Jerusalem, and joy in my people" (Isa. lxv, 18, 19), "in whom is my delight" (Psa. xvi. 3). Some of these worlds antedated the creation of our world, for when the creation of the earth was projected in the council of heaven "the morning stars sang together, and all the Sons of God shouted for joy." (Job xxxviii, 7.) (These Sons of God being heads of worlds.)

Finally we quote from the pen of Mrs. E. G. White. She asserts that "our little world, the one dark blot in His glorious creation, will be honored above all other worlds in the universe of God." ("Desire of Ages," Trade Edition, p. 28.) "The worlds unfallen and the beavenly angels had watched with intense interest as the conflict (in the life of Christ) drew to its close." (Ibid, p. 827.)

In speaking of the binding of Satan during the millennium, the same author declares: "Limited to the earth, he will not have access to other worlds to tempt and annoy those who have never fallen" ("Great Controversy," p. 659); and in referring to the delights of the redeemed she says,—"All of the treasures of the universe will be open to the study of God's redeemed. Unfettered by mortality, they wing

their tireless flight to worlds afar,—worlds that thrilled with sorrow at human woe, and rang with songs of gladness at the tidings of a ransomed soul." (Ibid, p. 677.)

Quoting further from the same writer:—

"But the plan of redemption had a yet broader and deeper purpose than the salvation of man. It was not for this alone that Christ came to the earth . . . it was to vindicate the character of God before the universe. To this result of His great sacrifice,—its influence upon the intelligences of other worlds, as well as upon man,—the Savior looked forward when, just before His crucifixion, He said, 'Now is the judgment of this world, now shall the prince of this world be cast out, and I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me.'

"It was the marvel of all the universe that Christ should humble Himself to save fallen man. That He who had passed from star to star, from world to world, superintending all, by His providence supplying the needs of every order of beings in His vast creation,—that He should consent to leave His glory and take upon Himself human nature was a mystery which the sinless intelligences of other worlds desired to understand." (P. 69.)

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he have received a blessing at his hands. There was no member of our race in Abraham's day who was superior to him, and who was thereby qualified to confer the blessing of heaven upon the "father of the faithful."

If Melchizedek had been a member of our human family, and if it was possible to have established his priesthood—superior beyond comparison to the Aaronic—in this world at the time *when he was here, and was recognized as the priest of the Most High God by Abraham, why did not Jehovah choose and establish the Melchizedek order here, instead of the Aaronic? Would he discard* the superior for the inferior? The only logical conclusion is that Melchizedek was *not* a member of our human family; and, further, that the position in this order of priesthood *for our world* once held by Adam, but forfeited in consequence of his sin,—which brought upon him the sentence of death, whereas with the Melchizedek priesthood goes the power of endless life,—could not be reëstablished in our human family until One was born to our race in Whom was vested all of the prerogatives, and Who would accomplish all that was necessary to qualify Him to fill that exalted position for our world. Such a One was the man Christ Jesus,—the "last Adam."

The place chosen by Melchizedek for his abode while here, with its immediate environment, was preëminently the place above all others on the entire face of the globe for the manifestation of the supernatural. It is believed that here the angel of the Lord stayed the hand of Abraham when he was about to offer his son upon the altar of sacrifice, and the ram was miraculously entangled in the thicket to provide an acceptable sacrifice. (Gen. xxii, 2, 10-18.) It was here that David saw an angel who had been sent to smite the city. (II Sam. xxiv, 16, 17.) The angel of the Lord smote 185,000 soldiers of the Assyrian army who were encamped against Jerusalem in one night. (II Kings xix, 35.)

Again the angel of the Lord appeared to Zacharias pre-announcing the birth of John the Baptist. It was on the pinnacle of the temple at Jerusalem that Satan appeared personally and talked face to face with the Savior of men. At Jerusalem numerous prophets, filled with the Holy Spirit, proclaimed God's will to men.

It was at this center that darkness overspread the land for the space of three hours when Jesus hung on the cross, where also the rocks were rent and the dead came forth and appeared to many, and the veil of the temple

was rent from top to bottom by an unseen hand, and, greatest of all supernatural manifestations, the Lord of Glory came forth from the tomb, and from the Mount of Olives near at hand ascended bodily to heaven.

It was at this center of religious phenomena that the Holy Spirit was poured out upon the Day of Pentecost, which conferred upon men the gift of tongues by which the gospel was given such mighty impetus when the apostles stood up and preached the crucified One to "men out of every nation under heaven." Here also many mighty miracles were wrought, some of which were acknowledged by the faithless Sanhedrin. (Acts iv, 16.) History informs us that just prior to the destruction of Jerusalem in A. D. 70, a strange, mysterious man went through the streets of the city day and night uttering the warning note, "Woe to the inhabitants of Jerusalem." It was to this point that a supernatural star guided the Magi.

He who does not accept the idea of the visitation of supernatural beings to our world does not accept the authority of the Bible. To discard the supernatural is to reject the Christian religion. Seeing that the plan of salvation is so largely built upon the supernatural, it is not inconsistent to regard Melchizedek, who

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When Abraham was called of God to dwell in Canaan he resided there as a sojourner, a stranger in a strange land, among nations who were altogether heathen. While sojourning there he met Melchizedek and received a blessing at his hands. Abraham's descendants dwelt in Egypt until they had increased to approximately three millions of souls. Then Jehovah, in the carrying out of His purpose to make of the seed of Abraham a separate and distinct nation by whom He might perpetuate His name and His truth in the earth, and who were to be the progenitors of Christ, issued the call for them to return to the land wherein Abraham had sojourned and where he had met Melchizedek. Accompanying the call was the charge that the nations dwelling in the land (all of whom were heathen) should be either cast out or destroyed. In taking forceful possession of the land, so far as the record informs us, only one person and her household were found who met the approval of Heaven and were, therefore, spared. This person was Rahab, who by marriage came into the family line by which Jesus came into the world. If the deathless Melchizedek and his kingdom were in Palestine at this time why were they not mentioned as escaping destruction?

In the occupancy of the land by conquest

Melchizedek was not discovered, either as an individual or as serving in his office as priest-king. Someone will be inclined to say that "so much time had elapsed that he had been removed by the hand of death." But the Scriptures assert that he never died and that "he abideth a priest continually." (Heb. vii, 3, 8.) Furthermore, he has not been discovered to the present day. Therefore, his priestly service and his righteous kingdom did not belong to this world, nor was he a member of our human family, for it is manifestly impossible that a king, being a man greater in the estimation of heaven than Abraham (and the title is nothing unless he possessed a kingdom), a priest greater than all in the Aaronic line, should have a kingdom and a perpetual priesthood in this world, and yet no discovery be made either of himself or of his kingdom in the land where Abraham met him when the descendants of the latter returned with the God-given charge to destroy or drive out the nations possessing the land, all of whom were declared of heaven to have been the embodiment of wickedness.

CHAPTER X

DIVINE LOVE PROMPTED THE CHOICE

"Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God." (Heb. xii, 2.)

The question might with propriety be raised, "Why did the Son of God choose to identify Himself to all eternity with the people of a *fallen* world?" The inhabitants of other worlds all possessed characters of perfect beauty and symmetry. To associate with them would be to drink perpetual joy. Companionship with them would be an endless stream of love, gliding on without a ripple of inharmony as the ages would roll into blissful eternity: no treachery in an unfallen world; no betrayal; no death scenes; no anguish of soul to force drops of life-blood from the brow of the innocent One; no crown of thorns; no cruel mocking; no fainting under the weight of a terrible Roman cross; no piercing nails for hands and feet; no sense of the sinner's condemnation with the

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is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow—and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."

The glory of His works as Creator gave Him an exalted name, but the love of God manifested in redemption added to His original glory gave Him a name that is above *every* name.

"Jesus, my Shepherd, Guardian, Friend;
My Prophet, Priest and King,
For all the blessings Thou dost send,
Accept the praise I bring."

CHAPTER XI

THE PURPOSE OF MELCHIZEDEK'S VISIT

"For we are made a spectacle (theater, margin) unto the world, and to angels, and to men." (I Cor. iv, 9.)

The conclusion being beyond controversy that the Melchizedek to whom the "father of the faithful" paid tithes was *not* a member of our human family, and that his kingdom was *not* of this world, but instead that he was the Adam, the everlasting father of another planet,—the query naturally arises, "How came he into our world, and what was the purpose of his visit?"

The possibility of his coming, as well as his ability *to* come, is proven by the fact of the gathering of the "Sons of God" from their various worlds to worship in the immediate presence of the Creator. The purpose of his visit is suggested in the statement that the people of this world "are made a spectacle" [theater], "to angels, and to men." (I Cor. iv, 9.) There is full Scripture evidence that *our* world is the only one in the universe that has fallen; our

Adam the only head of a world who has plunged his descendants into the gulf of sin with all the attendant wretchedness terminating, with those out of Christ, in eternal death.

This world then is the battle ground where the great controversy between righteousness and sin is being fought to a finish. It is also the only complete object lesson of the direful results of sin to be found in all the boundless expanse of space.

The visit of Melchizedek to this world would afford him opportunity to behold what utter ruin and woe sin has wrought; to compare the gloom of this "vale of tears" with the unsullied brightness and unalloyed happiness of his sinless homeland. As angels came to Eden to warn Adam and Eve of the terrible danger of joining the tempter in rebellion, so Melchizedek, with the direful results of sin indelibly impressed upon his mind, and with that desire intensified which would naturally burn in the bosom of every right-minded father to preserve his own household from ruin when beholding the desolation of another, would return to his "Salem," and in a general assembly of his blissful family vividly describe to them some of the woeful scenes of a sin-polluted world, to the end that they might forever avoid the sad mistake which resulted in the awful plunge of our

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Someone will ask, "Why did Abraham pay tithes to this distinguished visitor from another world?" I answer, "What better and wiser provision could have been made for his material entertainment than by affording this privilege to the most prominent, heaven-approved man of our race of that day?" And again, what better opportunity was there for "the father of the faithful" to set the *example* of tithe-paying, and receive the blessing which will surely follow true conformity to Jehovah's system of supporting the priesthood and the ministry.[1]

[1] Some are perplexed over the matter of Melchizedek having received tithes from Abraham, and especially so in view of the fact that the tithes paid were a portion of the "spoils" of war. A careful reading of the account will reveal the fact that Abraham's conquest was solely for the purpose of recovering "the persons" and "the goods" which had been stolen from Sodom. "The persons" were restored to the king of Sodom, a tithe of "the goods and victuals" were given to Melchizedek, and the remainder of the same returned to the king of Sodom, except the portion eaten by the young men and given to a few others who had joined Abraham in the pursuit of the kings who made the assault upon Sodom. Thus the only "spoils" of war that were received by Melchizedek were "goods" and "victuals"; which was suitable provision for his entertainment by "the father of the faithful" while the former was here as a temporary visitor. (Gen. xiv, 11-24; Heb. i, 1, 2.)

The presence of the exalted Melchizedek gave Abraham the opportunity to pay tithes, and to receive in return for faithfulness the blessing of heaven which Melchizedek, as "priest of the Most High God," was by virtue

THE OFFICE OF PRIESTHOOD IN A SINLESS WORLD

Anticipating another seeming objection to the line of thought which may arise in meditative minds, it may be well to state that the idea of the priesthood does not necessarily refer to those who act as intercessors. Certainly in an unfallen world there could be no intercession for sin. *The interpretation of the name of Melchizedek suggests no thought of intercession for sin,* and his God-given name implies exactly what he is. Webster gives the primary definition of the Greek term for priest as "older, an elder, an old man."

of his priestly office prepared to bestow. By following the example of "the father of the faithful" in the payment of tithes to those who now minister in holy things, we will receive from Christ, our Priest of the Most High God after the order of Melchizedek, the fullness of heaven's blessing, for Christ is both prepared and empowered to bestow it. How could it have been possible for the highest man of our race in the world to have set the example of tithe-paying had not a higher person from another world been present at the opportune time. It does not seem consistent that Abraham would knowingly have paid tithes to a Canaanitish priest, or have received a blessing at his hands, for he had received definite instructions from the Lord concerning the wickedness of the Canaanites. And still another question arises: "Was any Canaanitish priest prepared to bestow the blessing of heaven upon the 'father of the faithful'? Or was any Canaanite entitled to the distinction, 'priest of the Most High God'?"

In the ancient Jewish economy there were "teaching priests." A "priest of the Most High God" in an unfallen world would fill the exalted offices of father, leader, and representative of his people in worship, and of "king of righteousness" and "king of peace under Him who hath prepared His throne in the heavens" and whose "kingdom ruleth over all." Our High Priest once offered the supreme sacrifice of Himself, and *now* pleads His blood in behalf of His people; but when the necessity passes He will cease to act as an Intercessor. *Still*, He will be our Priest-King, our Melchizedek.

In *our* world the inhabitants who feel the necessity of a Savior from sin associate the idea of the office of priest with intercession. The Savior of men, beholding our fatherless condition, volunteered to become our "Everlasting Father," our Intercessor. He gives us the assurance that if we ask in His name He "will pray the Father for" us; and "if any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father." We have then a "Great High Priest that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God." In all things, under Jehovah, He must have the preeminence. In an *unfallen world* the people would not associate the office of priesthood with the idea of intercession for sin.

In the book of Hebrews and in the idea of

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through the gates of the tomb and thus triumphed gloriously over sin, death and the originator of both. None other will ever wrest his family from the grave and destroy death and its author.

In very truth, all other Melchizedeks with their myriad children are dependent for original life and continued existence upon *our* Melchizedek. Surely in the galaxy of inhabited worlds in space, each created and upheld by Him,—each having its "everlasting father," its "king of righteousness,"—that "Child," who "unto us" was born, that "Son" who was given to our human family, will in all things have the pre-eminence: will be transcendent in glory above them all; and by His sacrifice, by the winning power of His love, *all*,—angels and men of all worlds,—will be bound in love and loyalty to the King of Heaven; and our world, now overshadowed by the gloom of sin and death, will be the most brilliant planet in the universe, for even the sun shall be ashamed of his brightness when "the Son of Righteousness" shall reign "on Mount Zion and before His ancients, gloriously."

"Now in the things which we are saying, the chief point is this; we have *such* a High Priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens; a minister of the sanc-

tuary and of the true tabernacle which the Lord pitched and not man." (Heb. viii, 1 R. V.)

"Crown Him with many crowns,
The Lamb upon His throne;
Hark! how the heavenly anthem drowns
All music but its own!
Awake, my soul, and sing
Of Him who died for thee;
And hail Him as thy matchless King
Through all eternity."

"Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, *By a new and living way*, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh; And having an high priest over the house of God; Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water." (Heb. x, 19-22.)

CHAPTER XII

THE THRONE OF THE UNIVERSE TO BE TRANSFERRED TO THE EARTH

"And he . . . showed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending from God out of heaven." "And there shall be no more curse: but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and His servants shall serve Him." (Rev. xxi, 10; xxii, 3.)

It may be a matter of amazement to some to learn that the throne of the universe will eventually be established in the earth. Inspired proof of this truth is found in the statement that "the throne of God, and of the Lamb shall be in it, and His servants shall serve Him." (Rev. xxii, 1-3; Rev. xxi, 3.) These words occur as an essential part of the description of the New Jerusalem, the capital city of the earth made new.

But why the necessity for the location of the "throne of God and of the Lamb" in this earth? Careful reflection upon this subject will reveal the fact that with the choice of both the Father and Son that this world should be the eternal kingdom of Christ, that this land should be the

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pointed order, circling the throne of Deity." ("Great Controversy," p. 677.)

How encouraging, how inspiring the thought for the inhabitants of this world, who have been in succession groaning under the excruciating load of sin for 6,000 weary years, that eventually their Eden home will be the brightest, the most glorious spot in all the universe, and they the most favored beings, ever enjoying the presence of God, as it is written: "And they shall see His face," and "in Thy presence is fullness of joy"; "at Thy right hand there are pleasures forevermore." How complete will be the triumph over sin and Satan when this world, having been, because of sin, the darkest spot in all the universe and the place where the prince of darkness thought to establish his kingdom of misery forever, is wrested by the Mighty One from his grasp, and, purified, is made the brightest, happiest spot in all the universe.

When Christ, by becoming a member of our human family and by completely vanquishing Satan, had won back the dominion lost by Adam, He became the lawful Heir to this world. When we, through the strength of a risen Savior, triumph over Satan and become sons of God by being born from above (Jno. i, 12, 13), then *we* are counted joint-heirs with Christ in the kingdom. (Rom. viii, 16, 17.) And thus

it is that the kingdom and dominion and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven shall be given to the *people* of the saints of the Most High. (Dan. vii, 27.) The only begotten Son of God, Christ Jesus our Lord, became the Melchizedek of this world that He might win it back to the universe of Jehovah. To accomplish this glorious result was He born into our world as one of earth's inhabitants.

It is the purpose of Jehovah that the universal family shall be connected with Him indissolubly. This was manifest in the creation, for He made each of the heads of worlds a "son of God." Thus Adam was a "son of God" (Luke iii, 38), but when our first parent had broken the connection between this world and God,—forfeited his sonship,—to reëstablish the essential connection between Jehovah and man the chasm must be bridged by the awful sacrifice of Christ, who left His exalted position and gave Himself to be the Head and Melchizedek of this world. When finally, by the condescension of Christ, all of the wounds and scars of sin are healed, the riven creation will be restored, eternally mended, and then again will all "the sons of God" shout in unison for overflowing joy, even as they did in the beginning when the creation of this world was projected in the councils of the Father and Son. Then

upon this earth will rest the throne of God; to this earth will come the myriads of the "sons of God" to the perennial councils of a glorified universe. From this earth will go forth the "sons of God," filled with wisdom and radiant with glory, to teach an erstwhile disturbed universe that God is wisdom, God is love.

Those who have endured all of the terrors incident to sin,—temptation, trial, suffering, suspension between hope and despair, persecution (and the great majority of them overcome by the grim monster Death),—in this world, and under it all have developed characters which will place them on an equality with the angels, will be honored with the most favored place of any of God's creatures in all the universe, for no others will have passed through the same experiences, none will have developed characters under like adverse conditions. God has anticipated and made provision for this award in the plan of salvation, for when His eternal purpose is made complete "the throne of God and of the Lamb" will be transferred to this world, and the tabernacle of God will be with men, "and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be with them, and be their God." And yet all this is simply "the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us through Christ Jesus."

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bear the story of God's tested love to worlds yet to be created and peopled, priests of the Most High, bearing ever the bloodless, spiritual sacrifices of praise and loving service. And these eternal blessings are in God's plan offered to all. "What love, O my God, what love!"

CHAPTER XIII

OTHER VIEWS TESTED

MELCHIZEDEK WAS NOT CHRIST, because:

1. An individual cannot be a type of himself, else similitude and identity are the same thing.

2. Jehovah would not declare that Christ was made a Priest like unto Himself or after His own similitude, or a Priest after His own order. (Psa. cx, 4.) It would seem irreverent to say that God swore His Son's priesthood was *like* His Son's priesthood.

3. It requires more than *one* to constitute an "order." Melchizedek was *one:* Christ "*another*" after the same "order." (Heb. vii, 15.)

4. Christ had a mother, and a genealogy: was born "an infant of days": had an end of life. It is witnessed of Melchizedek that "He liveth" and that "He abideth a priest continually." In the days of Melchizedek Christ could not consistently be our High Priest, for He had not yet been born into our family.

5. Melchizedek is not entitled to the names which belong to the Creator and Redeemer.

MELCHIZEDEK COULD NOT BE THE HOLY SPIRIT PERSONIFIED, for:

1. There is no Scripture evidence that the Holy Spirit fills the office of priest-king with a seat of government called "Salem." Jehovah Himself reigns as King in the heavenly Jerusalem, and Christ is associated with Him upon the throne. The Holy Spirit comes as a voice, not as a man.

2. Every high priest is taken from among *men*. (Heb. ii, 11, 14-18; v, 1, 2.) The Holy Spirit is not a man.

3. Where is the scriptural authority that the Holy Spirit is a type of Christ? It is His representative, but not a type of Him.

4. The Abrahamic Melchizedek was evidently inferior to Christ. We are not justified in making any distinction in regard to the rank of these two persons of the Godhead: i. e., the Holy Spirit and Christ.

5. It would at least seem superfluous to tell us that the Holy Spirit is "without father and mother."

6. What reason have we for believing that the Holy Spirit is a member of an "order" of priesthood?

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existed and there be no record of it. Certainly such a nation, had it existed in our world, would have been chosen for the preservation of God's Word and Name in the earth, and for the proclamation of His Truth to mankind.

If Melchizedek was a member of our human family and was the king of a righteous nation in our world in Abraham's day, why should God choose Abraham to "make of him a great and mighty nation" to be the conservator of His Truth in the earth, and to be the progenitor of Christ?

5. If a "better" man of our race than Abraham was on earth in Abraham's day, surely God would have chosen the better to fill the exalted position of "father of the faithful."

We know of no other class of beings of which Melchizedek could be a member, save the inhabitants of other worlds than our own. He was *not* a fabled being.

CHAPTER XIV

RECAPITULATION

After the treatise necessary to amply fortify and elucidate any line of scriptural thought, a review in simple outline will enable the reader, at a glance, to take a more comprehensive view of the ground covered. Infinite wisdom designed that certain features of gospel truth should be "kept secret," "from the beginning of the world," until the opportune time should arrive for their full revelation; "to the intent that *now*" "might be" [made] "known by the church the manifold wisdom of God, according to the eternal purpose which He purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord." (Rom. xvi, 25, 26; Eph. iii, 10-11.)

OUTLINE

The Melchizedek who blessed Abraham was *not* Christ. Christ *is* [our] Melchizedek.

THE PURPOSE OF THE BOOK OF HEBREWS is to exalt the priesthood of Christ. The climax of this inspired exaltation is reached in the declara-

tion that He is a Priest "forever, after the order of Melchizedek." This effort to glorify the exalted priesthood of the greatest High Priest known to the universe is lost upon us unless we can discover the significance of the Melchizedek priesthood.

CHRIST OUR MELCHIZEDEK

1. The Melchizedek "order" of priesthood must be composed of a *group* of priests, as more than *one* is required to constitute an "order." The priesthood of this world was originally vested in the father of each family, and thus naturally the office of *high*-priesthood would, according to the Divine plan, have rested upon Adam, the original father of our race: who was also the ruler, and father, under God, of this world. *All* things in this world were put under his dominion: (Heb. ii, 7, 8.)

2. When Adam had lost his right to the priesthood (fatherhood and representation) of this world, and the power to be, in truth, the everlasting father of the human family, all types and shadows pointed forward to the coming One as the "seed of the woman," the member of our family, who was to "bruise the serpent's head," and through conquering him wrest from him the kingdom usurped from Adam.

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ter of God to be love, and to save all who would be saved.

7. He thus became man, "God with us," suffering as man suffered, meeting temptation as man must meet it, and conquering that man may conquer. Made perfect through suffering, He became unto all them that obey Him the Author of the eternal salvation, "called of God, a High Priest after the order of Melchizedek" (Heb. v, 5-10),—the High Priest of this world, its Second Father, taking the place lost by Adam.

8. In His priesthood for sinful man He not only fills the Melchizedek priesthood, but is also antitype of the Levitical priesthood. (Hebrews viii, 9.)

9. In the Melchizedek priesthood we found the following essentials: righteousness, sonship, fatherhood, and eternal life, and, therefore, an everlasting priesthood. (Hebrews vii.)

10. During the interval between the fall of the first Adam and the complete triumph over Satan, sin and death by the last Adam, Satan appeared in the presence of Jehovah with the "sons of God," who evidently were representatives of other worlds. Satan was of this. (Job. i, 6, 7 and ii, 1, 2.)

11. Adam was created a "son of God," placed at the head of our world, and doubtless could

have gone to the throne of the universe to join with the "sons of God" of other worlds in worship, had he not surrendered his dominion to Satan.

12. Not until Christ had taken those steps which made Him *our* "Everlasting Father," the "last Adam," did He become our Priest-King, at which time He became our Melchizedek, and Melchizedek means priest-king of righteousness and of peace. The steps essential to occupying this position were: (a) Being born into *our* human family (a priest must be chosen from among the people). (b) He must be a sin-conqueror, and therefore a death-conqueror. (c) He must triumph over him who caused the downfall of the first Adam, and thus wrest the dominion from the usurper. (d) "He must have somewhat to offer" as a sacrifice for the sins of His people. (e) He must have access [ascend] to heaven, "anoint the most holy," and enter upon his mediatorial work as Representative of our race. Not until He had accomplished all this did He fully become our great High Priest "after the order of Melchizedek."

13. Thus, coincident with His becoming the "last Adam," He became our High Priest after the aforesaid "order." And thus, logically, the "order" is composed of heads of worlds,—

Adams, sons of God, everlasting fathers, priest-kings over their respective worlds.

14. All priest-kings occupy exalted positions: all sons of God have high honor; but *our* Priest-King must in all things have the preëminence above them all. He is Head of *all* worlds, Creator of all, worshiped by all, both angels and men, and yet He is the only one who died to redeem His world. No other Melchizedek can point to his family and say that he shed his blood for their redemption. None other created his world. Surely our "Everlasting Father" is entitled to the name "King of kings," for He created and upholds the kings of all worlds, and has universal dominion.

15. Doubtless many Melchizedeks have paid visits to our world to behold the only object lesson of sin's blighting effects in all the universe, and have then returned to their own worlds to report the results of rebellion against God, as witnessed in this "vale of tears," and thus more firmly bind their families in loyalty to the government of heaven. This should not stagger our faith if we believe that Moses and Elias came from glory to visit our world when special occasion required. (Luke ix, 30.)

16. When Jesus, who is given to our world and to our human family to all eternity, comes the second time to gather the subjects of His

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APPENDIX

Much evidence upon all important scriptural themes is found scattered through the Sacred Volume in fragmentary form. This is true of the subject which has been briefly presented in the foregoing pages. It seemed best to the author not to encumber the body of the book by attempting to marshal together all of this fragmentary evidence, and thus interrupt the argument. Hence the rather voluminous appendix.

I. Among all of the priests and priesthoods brought to view in the Bible, why is Melchizedek and his order of priesthood singled out and given such preëminence? A correct understanding of this order of priesthood enlarges our minds as to its importance. Surely a priest-king who stands at the head of a sinless world is an important unit in God's universe. The law of the Levitical priesthood made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope (by the Melchizedek priesthood) did. (Heb. vii, 19.)

II. In the helps appended to the Oxford Bible, prepared by C. J. Schofield, D.D., the

author makes the following comments concerning the Melchizedek priesthood, "The Melchizedek high-priesthood was greater than the Aaronic: (a) because Aaron in Abraham paid tithes to Melchizedek; (b) because the Aaronic priesthood made nothing perfect; (c) because Aaronic priests died."

III. Was not the Aaronic or Levitical priesthood as exalted as it was possible that any order of priesthood, composed of members of our human family could be? And if it was not the highest that could be organized in our human family, why did not the Lord select and organize the highest order possible to lead His people to the greatest possible perfection? Surely He did not desire anything less than the highest state of perfection in His people, and His plan was that that state should be brought about through the ministration of the priesthood. Then it must be self-evident that the order of the Melchizedek priesthood was not composed of members of our fallen humanity, for the argument of Paul is that the Melchizedek order is vastly superior to the Aaronic. (Heb. vii, 4-8.)

IV. Paul was careful to state that at the time of his writing the book of Hebrews it did not seem advisable for him to make full revelation concerning the identity of Melchizedek.

Mark his statement: "Of whom we have many things to say, and hard to be uttered, seeing ye are dull of hearing." (Heb. v, 11.) And thus he left the question for the investigation that was to continue down the ages, until the time would come that God would deliver to His church, the key to unlock this mystery.

If Melchizedek was simply a Canaanitish priest, but righteous in character, how easy it would have been for Paul to have made the matter clear in a single sentence even to ears that were "dull of hearing."

V. Both Melchizedek and Abraham were in our world at the same time, even at a time when Jehovah began to organize his people into a nation and into a church. Why did not God select the greater of the two, who was already a priest and a king, to be the head of His organized nation and church in the earth? If Melchizedek was a member of our human family, his selection for the position would have had two great advantages over the successive kings who ruled over Israel. The great majority of them were desperately wicked and soon passed by reason of death, while Melchizedek was righteous and deathless, so in the choice of him (provided he was a member of our race) there would not have been the corrupting influence of

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qualification belongs to that order. Therefore, all efforts of misguided men in this matter are impotent.

VIII. Surely there is great significance attached to the fact that there is absolutely only one man in the whole inspired record,[1] who is by name or by the official title Melchizedek in the same class and in the same "order" as the Melchizedek who met Abraham, and that Man is Christ. The only individuals mentioned in Holy Writ that we can locate in the same class (the same "order") are "the sons of God" mentioned three times in the book of Job. Probably no one would claim that these "sons of God" were members of our human family, but in the light of other Scriptures already cited they perfectly fill the specifications of being the official heads of other worlds than ours. With the exception of Adam and Christ it is manifestly an impossibility to find another member of our race who corresponds with the specifications of Heb. vii, 3.

IX. AN UNCHANGEABLE PRIESTHOOD. There is absolutely no unchangeable priesthood covering the history of this world. There would, however, have been an unchangeable priesthood in this world had not Adam sinned. It must follow that in a sinless world the priesthood

[1] With the exception of Adam.

would be unchangeable. When Christ steps into the Melchizedek order, He steps into an unchangeable priesthood. (Heb. vii, 19-24.)

X. In proof that the Melchizedek priesthood is not composed of an order of men in our world, it is written that, although Christ is now a Priest in that order, yet if He were on earth He could not be a Priest. (Heb. viii, 4.) Therefore, regardless of the claims of any church that they possess the Melchizedek priesthood, according to the teaching of this Scripture, there are no priests of the Melchizedek order *now* officiating on earth.

XI. Another evidence that Melchizedek was not a member of our race is found in the fact that from the foundation of the world Jehovah has never approved of the combination of the two offices of priest and king in one individual, nor will He recognize such until He comes whose right it is. Every king, so far as the inspired record goes, who attempted to combine these two offices in himself met with the disapproval of heaven.

Seeing then that the Lord has never recognized either an individual or a group of individuals as priest-kings in our world, why should we make an exception of Melchizedek, when it is manifestly contrary to the Lord's plan to combine the two offices in one man in a sinful

world? Even Adam never really held these two offices, for the kingship of the world was never conferred upon him. He was only a prince, as is proven by the fact that he surrendered his dominion to Satan, whom Jesus styles "the *prince* of this world." (John xiv, 30.)

XII. A suggestive evidence that Melchizedek was *not* a member of our human family is found in the fact that he was *not* chosen as "father of the faithful," which high honor was conferred upon Abraham, although it is expressly stated that Melchizedek was a "better" personage than Abraham. (Heb. vii, 6, 7.) If there was a member of our human family upon the stage of action in Abraham's day who was conceded by inspiration to have been superior to Abraham, surely the "better" would have been chosen to occupy the exalted position of "father of the faithful." Still further evidence that he did not belong to our race is supplied in the statement that he "abideth a priest continually." "Here men die."

The condition of Canaan in Abraham's day, the greatness of Melchizedek, lead to the conclusion that he was not a local king by that name, but a temporary visitor with that title, greater than Abraham (Heb. vii, 4, 7), one of the perfect units in God's great plan of the universe, whom Abraham recognized, and to

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the king of Jerusalem also by raining destruction in the form of hailstones from heaven. The five kings hid themselves in a cave, where they were shut up by the command of Joshua till he had accomplished the complete rout of his enemies, when they were brought forth and slain. In the recounting of the thirty-one wicked kings with their kingdoms which the Lord overthrew to give His people possession of the promised land, the third in the list is the king of Jerusalem. (Josh. xiii, 9, 10.)

Later the Jebusites who inhabited Jerusalem sent a challenge to King David that he could not occupy their city, except on certain conditions. David utterly disregarded the conditions and took forceful possession of the city, from whence it is called "the City of David." (II Sam. v, 6, 9.)

All of this evidence goes to prove that there was no righteous nation or kingdom occupying the Salem (afterward Jerusalem) where Melchizedek had temporary abode. (Josh. x, 1-27.)

XIV. If (aside from Adam) God chose *one* member of our race and made of him a Melchizedek—a priest-king—He could have chosen *another* and still *another* individual, conferring upon each this high office, until *an order* of this priesthood had been established in our world,

which order would have been superior to that of the Levitical priesthood; for, according to inspiration (Heb. vii, 4-10), this superiority was conceded by the payment of tithe on the part of Abraham to Melchizedek. If God's plan could be carried out in thus establishing an order of the *higher* priesthood *composed of members of our race* in Abraham's day, why did He establish the Levitical—the inferior—instead?

Again, if Melchizedek was a member of *our* human family, and yet such an exalted priest-king, why is it that in all of the history of the world since Adam's day there is no other member of our race, save the man Christ Jesus, who is set forth as being a priest of that "order"? And how exalted must be the order when Christ is the *only member of our race* who, as Adam's successor, is declared to be a Priest-King after the order of Melchizedek. Both the Scriptural facts and the resistless logic compel the conclusion that Melchizedek was *not* a member of our race.

XV. The book of Hebrews not only sets forth the eternal priesthood of Christ, but also reveals more clearly and definitely than any other book of the Bible the fact of His succession to the position lost by Adam, by which He becomes the Head of the Divine-

human family, and as "the seed of the woman" (Gen. iii, 15) vanquishes Satan by virtue of the triumph of Calvary (Heb. ii, 14); and thus, as the Mediator of the New Covenant, He will ultimately fulfill the promise to Abraham that he should be "heir of the world." (Rom. iv, 13.) Thus, the reason why these two thoughts are so closely interwoven in the book of Hebrews is perfectly clear:—namely, that in winning back the world-dominion lost by Adam He can and will fulfill the promise to Abraham, and in the fulfillment of it He Himself becomes Adam's successor,—this world's eternal Priest-King, or Priest forever after the order of Melchizedek.

XVI. Some tell us that "the Holy Spirit, speaking through Shem, made him Melchizedek, priest of the Most High God." If this position is correct, the inevitable logic of it is that any man through whom the Lord speaks by His Holy Spirit thereby becomes a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek, and consequently a "king of righteousness," and "king of peace," for these offices must go with the title.

If the oath simply made Christ "like the Holy Spirit," as some say, what would be the occasion for repentance on the part of the Father? As a matter of fact, there would be no force to the oath if its intent was to make Christ like the Holy Spirit, for in His Divine

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of the tomb,—He entered upon the preliminary work pertaining to His priesthood, and when the subjects of His kingdom are all made up, He will enter upon His kingly office. He is now preparing the subjects for His eternal kingdom. The logic of this is that as Adam was in the beginning the high priest of our world, and had he not fallen, would have been our eternal king as soon as the subjects of his kingdom were all made up, and as Christ became our High Priest and will be our eternal King, our Melchizedek, so all heads of worlds are high priests after the order of Melchizedek.

XIX. The reason for Adam's failure in becoming our eternal king, our Melchizedek, was because of his failure in righteousness. "But unto the Son He" [God] "saith, Thy Throne, O God, is forever and ever; a scepter of righteousness is the scepter of Thy kingdom. Thou hast loved righteousness and hated iniquity, therefore God, even Thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows." (Heb. i, 8, 9.) A scepter is the symbol of kingly power. Only he who wields a scepter of righteousness can in God's perfect plan be a king to all eternity.

XX. A theory set forth by the Jewish leaders asserted that Melchizedek was Shem. I am

not surprised that they should see only a character like Shem in Melchizedek, for they rejected all the Scripture evidence which proves Christ to be the Messiah, including the light focused by the Gospel on that wonderful Messianic Psalm (110) in which the oath of the eternal priesthood of Christ is recorded. Then, too, their view is plainly contradictory to Scripture statements, which declares that Melchizedek was without father, without descent, without end of life, and that he "abideth a priest continually." It is utterly impossible that this Scripture could have been descriptive of Shem, for he had both father and mother, also a pedigree from Adam, and end of life, and could not have remained a priest continually, for, as noted, death ended his career.

It would seem evident that Shem never saw the Land of Canaan, in which land Abraham met Melchizedek, for, so far as we have any record, the only descendants of Shem who ever made the journey of 500 miles westward from their home in Mesopotamia, were Terah, Abraham, Lot, and their families. Had the patriarch Shem also transferred his residence to Canaan, surely there would have been mention made of the fact. It is not at all probable that the aged survivor of the Deluge would leave his home and family in "Ur of the Chal-

dees" and take up his abode with the descendants of Ham in Canaan.

XXI. Some would count Melchizedek a Canaanitish priest and put him in the same class as Jethro, the priest or prince of Midian. However, God does not put these two persons in the same class. If Melchizedek was simply a Canaanitish priest, would inspiration rank him superior to Abraham, and one who could confer a blessing upon the "father of the faithful," and to whom the latter would pay tithes? Then, too, Jehovah never placed Himself under oath to the effect that Christ should be a Priest forever after the order of Jethro. Surely Melchizedek must have been a far superior personage to Jethro. If the reader will take the trouble to study the brief Bible history of Jethro and his family, he will be convinced that he was not a recognized priest of Jehovah. God does not put Jethro on the same basis as Melchizedek. He is never called a priest of the Most High God, but simply a priest or prince [margin] of Midian, even as there were priests or princes of Egypt and of other heathen countries.

XXII. Surely it will not stagger the faith of any believer in the Bible to accept the statement that it is both possible and plausible that the inhabitants of other worlds have visited our

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all in perfect accord as to the wording of the text—one of them, if possible, making the expression "abideth a priest continually" even stronger by rendering it "abideth a priest perpetually."

XXIV. When we speak of a Cæsar, a kaiser, a sultan, a Pharaoh, or a shah, we know exactly where to place them, because each of them belongs to a distinct order of rulers. Why should not the Bible student know in what class to place a priest after the order of Melchizedek, especially as our Savior is the chief One in that order?

XXV. The study of the preceding pages has surely convinced the reader that both Christ and Melchizedek bear the title common to their order of priesthood. Therefore, Abraham would be perfectly correct in styling Christ our Melchizedek, for He is to be identified with our world forever as our Priest-King.

XXVI. When Christ finally sits upon the throne as this world's rightful King, He will fill the office of King in Adam's stead and will be a Priest-King "after the order of Melchizedek," which fact forces upon us the only logical conclusion possible,—namely, had Adam not failed and so finally have been crowned King, he would have been a priest-king "after the

order of Melchizedek," and, therefore, this order is composed of those who are world-wide rulers in sinless worlds.

XXVII. When we had lost our father Adam, the head of our world—the one who would have attained to the office of priest-king, or Melchizedek—there was but one possible way to supply the necessity: the Son of God must be born into our human family. (John xviii, 36; Isa. ix, 6, 7.)

No being in the universe could possibly become a king perfectly adapted to the conditions essential for successful rulership over a people who will have passed through the experiences of the ultimately redeemed family of this world unless he were *born* a member of their race: unless he was partaker of their humanity: in all things made like unto his brethren, "tempted in all points like as we are" and finally dying for our sins. Jesus Christ brings to the office of priest-kingship, a perfect personality, perfection of character, and absolute completeness and perfection of experience.

XXVIII. After the object lesson of rebellion of sin, of misery, woe, and death in this world (which in a sense is the lesson book of the universe) *then*, by the power of a risen Savior who is also Creator, this dark world—the terrible battlefield of sin—will be wrested

from Satan, and be transformed into the brightest, most glorious sphere in the universe, "according to the power whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto Himself," and because of this redemption accomplished by the Son of Man, there shall be given unto "Him a name that is above every name."

XXIX. The oath which makes Christ a Priest forever after the order of Melchizedek makes Him also "the surety of a better testament" (Heb. vii, 20-22), and this same "better testament" comprehends in its provisions the clothing of redeemed humanity with immortality in a sinless state (Heb. viii, 8-12), and the re-creation of the earth to be their eternally peaceful home. (Isa. xlix, 8, Heb. ix, 15.)

THE ULTIMATE PURPOSE OF THE OATH, THE EXALTATION OF CHRIST

XXX. In demonstrating the ultimate purpose of the oath of Jehovah, by which Christ is made a Priest after the order of Melchizedek, we must consider two things which are inalienable from the one whom God creates for, or calls to, the order of the Melchizedek priesthood. These two things—conferred by God either in the design and act of creating the individual to fill a position in a certain exalted order—namely, to be a world ruler, or, as in

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after His humiliation, in the time of His exaltation. Agreeing, then, that the effect of the oath of Jehovah in conferring the title Melchizedek upon Christ will be to highly exalt Him, we must also agree that in Jehovah's effort to exalt Him the very climax is reached in declaring Him to be a Priest forever after the order of Melchizedek.

How is it then that some say that Melchizedek was nothing more than a mere Canaanitish priest? Would there be any effect whatever in the way of exaltation as the result of the oath if it simply made Christ's final position and priesthood parallel with that of a Canaanitish priest? In all candor let us ask what glory, what majesty in the minds of men is added to the priesthood of Christ if the oath of Jehovah simply made Him a Priest after the order of an unknown Canaanitish priest? It would even detract from the majesty of Christ's eternal priesthood and kingship to say that in His exaltation He was made a Priest after the order of Aaron, and we must believe that Aaron, in his office of high priest over God's organized people in the earth, occupied a position superior to that held by any purely Canaanitish priest. Therefore, how much more would it detract from the majesty of the priesthood of Christ to declare that He was made

by the oath of Jehovah a Priest like unto a certain Canaanitish priest.

But if it was the intent of the oath that by it He should be constituted a Priest *forever* after the order of a certain notable priest in one of the Canaanitish nations, then we would be justified in putting such an interpretation upon the oath, which would make it read, "The Lord hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou art a Priest forever after the order of a certain Canaanitish priest, called Melchizedek." But such an interpretation, instead of adding glory to the eternal priesthood of Christ, would greatly detract therefrom. Would it not also make a burlesque of the sacred oath of Jehovah?

On the other hand, if we give to the oath of Jehovah its true weight and significance, and recognize that by it "God hath highly exalted Him," and that in styling Him a Priest after the order of Melchizedek, he "hath given Him a name that is above every name," and that thus the Redeemer of the world becomes its rightful Priest-King to all eternity, and also the "King of kings" of ALL worlds, then we do not detract from the glory and majesty intended of God to be conferred upon Christ by the oath, nor do we make that sacred oath a meaningless parody. It is true that the road

to exaltation was by the pathway of humiliation, but surely the final result of the oath of Jehovah will be the bestowal upon Christ of "a name that is above every name." "Thou art My Son, to-day have I begotten Thee." (Heb. v, 5.) In the day that He was begotten from the dead He succeeded to the high priesthood of this world. (Rom. i, 4.)

Question. When did Christ become a Priest? *Answer.* When He took Adam's place as the head of our world or became the "last Adam." He did this when He had triumphed over sin, died for sin, and ascended to heaven, having "somewhat to offer."

Question. After what order did He then become High Priest? *Answer.* After the order of Melchizedek.

Question. Then after what order would Adam have been a priest if he had not lost his right and his priesthood by sin? *Answer.* After the order of Melchizedek.

Question. Then what constitutes one a priest after the order of Melchizedek? *Answer.* Being the head, the priest-king, of a world.

Then who was the Melchizedek who met Abraham?

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